FEAR

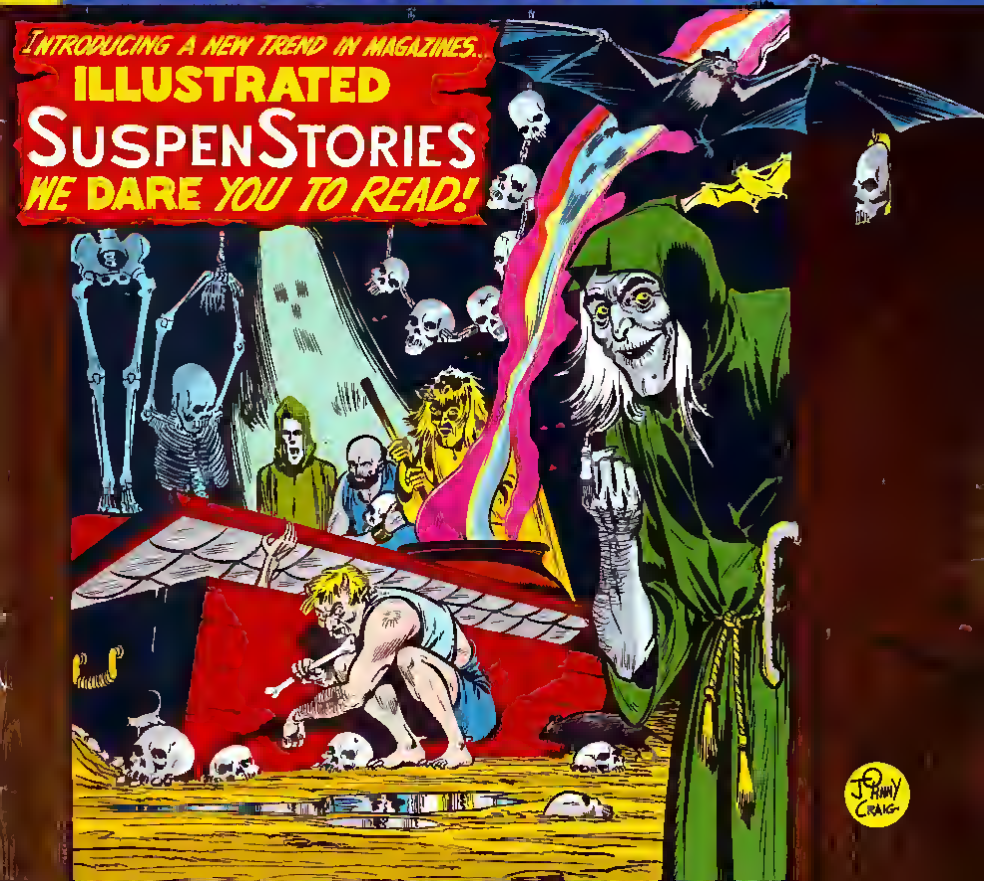
HERE ARE TALES THAT WILL USHER YOU INTO

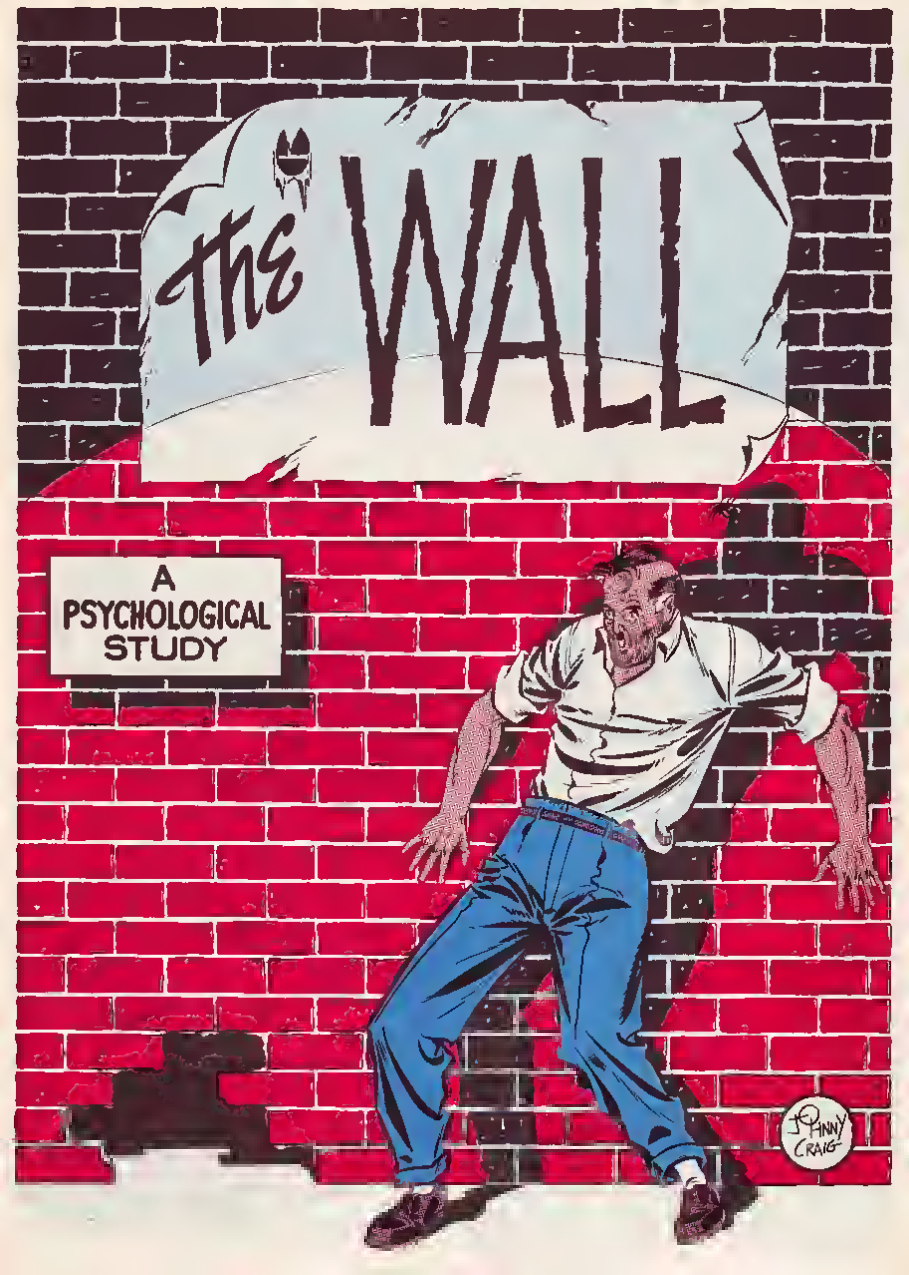
THE HAUNT OF FEAR

AN ENTERTAINING COMIC

NO.15
MAY - JUNE
A.K.A.
NO.1

REPRINT EDITION




THE WALL
A PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY
JOHNNY CRAIG

MY NAME IS NEAL HARPER. CLARA AND I WERE A HAPPILY MARRIED COUPLE... ONCE! BUT SINCE THE ARRIVAL OF SNOOKY, HATE SEEPED INTO THE HOUSEHOLD AND SLOWLY BEGAN TO DISINTERGRATE OUR LOVE. I WAS FRUSTRATED AT EVERY MOVE... AT EVERY TURN... AND SNOOKY WAS ALWAYS TO BLAME!..YOU SEE, SNOOKY WAS CLARA'S PET CAT...

DON'T SAY "NO" TO *ME*, YOU WORM! I DON'T CARE HOW FAR IT IS TO THE GROCERS! YOU *GO!* SNOOKY WANTS SOME MILK BEFORE I PUT HER TO BED!

Y-YES, DEAR... I'M SORRY...I... I'LL GO...

AND THAT'S HOW IT WAS! CLARA'S LOVE AND AFFECTION WERE NOW CENTERED ON SNOOKY... AND I WAS LITERALLY "OUT IN THE COLD!"

GROCERY

IT WAS ALWAYS THE SAME...

NEAL HARPER, DON'T YOU *DARE* GO *NEAR* YOUR CHAIR WHILE SNOOKY IS SITTING IN IT!

YES, DEAR...

I WASN'T THE BOLD, ASSERTIVE TYPE WHO WOULD FIGHT BACK...PROBABLY WOULDN'T HAVE DONE MUCH GOOD ANYWAY... NOT AGAINST CLARA...

YOU PUT THAT CREAM RIGHT BACK WHERE YOU FOUND IT! IT'S SNOOKY'S! I BOUGHT SKIM MILK FOR *YOU!*

YES, DEAR...

THAT MANGY CAT!! I BEGAN TO LOATHE IT! HOW I WISHED I HAD THE NERVE TO WRING ITS NECK!

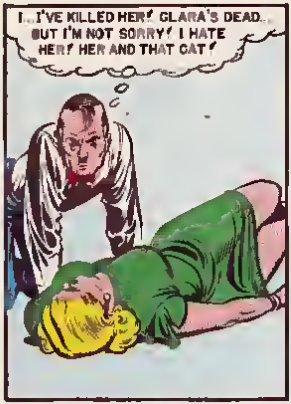
B- BUT IT'S *MY* BED..

I'M SORRY, NEAL! YOU'LL JUST HAVE TO SLEEP ON THE LIVING-ROOM COUCH FOR TONIGHT! SNOOKY WAS SLEEPING THERE FIRST, AND I DON'T WANT TO DISTURB HER...

...ALWAYS THE SAME! DON'T DO THIS! DON'T DO THAT! SNOOKY THIS, SNOOKY THAT! AND IT CONTINUALLY GREW WORSE UNTIL I HATED THAT CAT SO MUCH, IT NEARLY DROVE ME TO FRENZY!

SNOOKY! CATS! SNOOKY CATS! SNOOKY SNOOKY SNOOKY

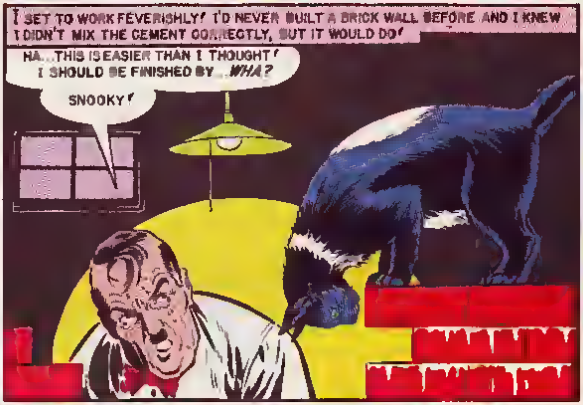

HMM-M... I STARTED THIS BOOK SOME TIME AGO! I THINK I'LL FINISH IT TONIGHT...
GET OUT OF MY CHAIR, YOU CONFOUNDED CAT!
NEAL!
YOU BEAST! PICKING ON POOR LIDDEW SNOOKY! COME HERE, YOU POOR THING...
SNOOKY! SNOOKY! SNOOKY! THAT'S ALL I HEAR AROUND THIS PLACE! YOU AND YOUR BLASTED CAT! YOU'RE DRIVING ME CRAZY!
IS MY LIDDEW SNOOKY ALL RIGHT NOW? POOR DARLING, YOU'RE SO FRIGHTENED, AREN'T YOU? POOR, POOR SNOOKY...
"POOR, POOR SNOOKY!" HA! SHE'S CAUSED NOTHING BUT TROUBLE EVER SINCE SHE CAME HERE, AND I'M GOING TO STOP IT ONCE AND FOR ALL!
THUD!
CLARA CLARA CLARA!
SHE'S DEAD!
3


I...I'VE KILLED HER! CLARA'S DEAD... BUT I'M NOT SORRY! I HATE HER! HER AND THAT CAT!

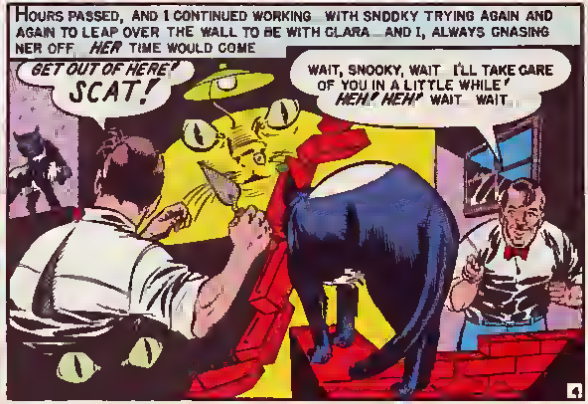

BUT I'LL HAVE TO GET RID OF HER BODY...TAKE IT DOWN THE CELLAR...MAYBE THROW HER IN THE FURNACE...


?

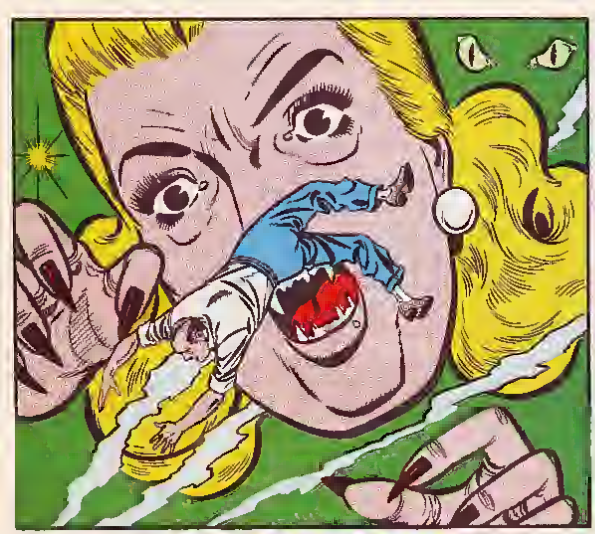

BRICKS! OF COURSE! I'LL BUILD A BRICK WALL...AND SEAL HER DEAD BODY BEHIND IT!


I SET TO WORK FEVERISHLY! I'D NEVER BUILT A BRICK WALL BEFORE AND I KNEW I DIDN'T MIX THE CEMENT CORRECTLY, BUT IT WOULD DO!
HA...THIS IS EASIER THAN I THOUGHT! I SHOULD BE FINISHED BY...WHA?
SNOOKY!


GWUXXN! CAT! STOP TRYING TO GET BEHIND THIS WALL! CLARA CAN'T COODLE YOU ANYMORE! CLARA'S DEAD!


HOURS PASSED, AND I CONTINUED WORKING WITH SNOOKY TRYING AGAIN AND AGAIN TO LEAP OVER THE WALL TO BE WITH CLARA...AND I, ALWAYS GNASING NER OFF...HER TIME WOULD COME
GET OUT OF HERE! SCAT!
WAIT, SNOOKY, WAIT I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU IN A LITTLE WHILE! HEH! HEH! WAIT WAIT...

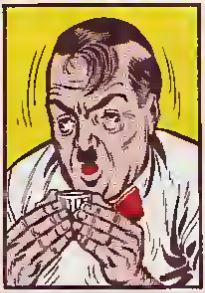

THERE! I'M FINISHED! I FEEL BETTER NOW THAT SHE'S OUT OF THE WAY! HA! NOW TO FIND SNOOKY AND KILL HER...
I SEARCHED THE HOUSE FROM CELLAR TO ATTIC! I COULDN'T FIND SNOOKY! AGAIN I SEARCHED... MORE CAREFULLY THIS TIME, AND STILL COULDN'T FIND HER! SHE WASN'T IN THE HOUSE...
BLAST IT! WHERE IS THAT CAT?! NOT IN THE HOUSE... I RANSACKED THIS PLACE SEVERAL TIMES WAIT!
THE WALL!... THE WALL WHERE CLARA IS BURIED! SNOOKY WAS TRYING TO GET BEHIND IT... MAYBE SHE SNEAKED OVER THE WALL WHEN I WASN'T LOOKING... ???
THAT MUST BE WHAT HAPPENED! SNOOKY WANTED TO BE WITH CLARA! HA!HA! NOW THEY'LL BE TOGETHER... FOREVER! HA!HA!HA!HA!HA!
SUDDENLY I FELT EXHAUSTED NOW THAT IT WAS ALL OVER I BEGAN TO TREMBLE SLIGHTLY! THE FEAR OF KILLING CLARA AND SNOOKY WAS NOW OVERTAKING ME...
I... I MUST CONTROL MYSELF!... NEED REST... I'LL... I'LL SLEEP... GO TO BED!
FULLY CLOTHED, I COLLAPSED ON THE BED AND INSTANTLY WAS ASLEEP. BUT I SLEPT FITFULLY, BEING PLAGUED BY TERRIFYING NIGHTMARES OF CLARA... AND CATS!



I AWOKE NEXT MORNING... I FELT WRETCHED. I HAD SLEPT LONG, BUT NOT WELL... NOT WELL AT ALL!

OHH--H...THOSE DREAMS! THEY COMPLETELY UNNERVED ME! I... I'M A NERVOUS WRECK! MAYBE A DRINK WILL HELP...

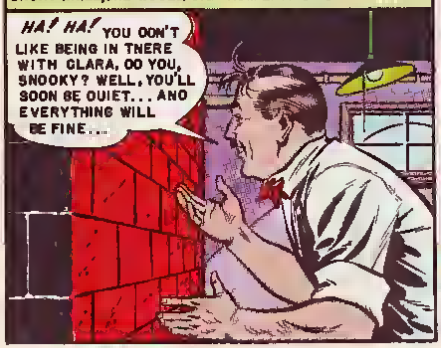






A CAT! I'D HEARD A CAT! SNOOKY WAS CALLING FOR HER FREEDOM... FOR HER *LIFE!* SHE KNEW THAT IN A SHORT WHILE, SHE WOULD DIE FROM LACK OF OXYGEN...

HA! HA! YOU DON'T LIKE BEING IN THERE WITH CLARA, DO YOU, SNOOKY? WELL, YOU'LL SOON BE QUIET... AND EVERYTHING WILL BE FINE...



BUT SNOOKY *DIDN'T* KEEP QUIET! SHE YOWLED AND SCREAMED INTERMINABLY... *SHE WOULDN'T DIE!* DAY AFTER DAY, NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, I HEARD HER PIERCING WAILS UNTIL MY NERVES WERE ON THE VERGE OF SPLITTING...

SHUT UP, DO YOU HEAR? SHUT UP, IN THERE! STOP IT! STOP IT! STOP IT!



SHE WOULDN'T STOP! SNOOKY WAS CRYING OUT HER LIVIO HATE FOR ME! SHE WOULDN'T DIE! SHE WOULDN'T *DIE!* AND NO MATTER WHERE I WENT IN THE HOUSE, I HEARD HER SCREAMING HER RAGE AT ME

ME-EYOW! MER-ROWER-R! MEE-YOW! MER-ROW-MEE ME-EYOW! MEE-YOW! MERROWER! MER-ROWERR!

I COULDN'T STAND IT! FINALLY, I DECIDED I WOULD HAVE TO KILL HER MYSELF. I WENT TO THE CELLAR.

THERE! I'VE KNOCKED OUT ONE BRICK DOWN BY THE FLOOR. I'LL REACH IN, GRAB THAT CAT...AND *THROTTLE* HER!

I STRETCHED MY ARM THROUGH THE OPENING...A TIGHT SQUEEZE...

MY HAND GROPED ABOUT SEARCHINGLY ...TRYING TO GRASP THE CAT...

AND THEN...

OUCH!

SHE BIT ME! THEN IN QUICK SUCCESSION, HER CLAWS RIPPED THROUGH MY FLESH, HER FANGS GNAWED MY HAND AND FINGERS! *I SCREAMED!*

HELP! MY ARM! I CAN'T GET MY ARM OUT! HELP!

MY ARM WAS BEING RIPPED AND TORN! I FELT WAVES OF KNIFING PAIN SURGE THROUGH ME. WARM BLOOD TRICKLED OVER MY ARM, THROUGH MY FINGERS! WARM, STICKY! SNOOKY WOULDN'T LET GO! SHE HAD ME AND WAS GOING TO *KILL* ME! I COULDN'T GET FREE! *SHE WAS TEARING ME TO SHREDS!!*

HELP! HELP!


WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
OFFICERS! SOMEONE! HELP ME! SNOOKY... EATING MY ARM TO PIECES!... HELP! PLEASE! GET ME FREE! I'LL DIE!
OKAY, MISTER! GRAB THAT PICK, JOE! WE'LL HAVE TO KNOCK DOWN THAT BRICK WALL!
TAKE IT EASY, MISTER... WE'LL HAVE YOUR ARM FREE IN A JIFFY!
HURRY! I'M BEING EATEN ALIVE! I'M... ???
?
SNOOKY...
OKAY, BUD... YOU CAN PULL YOUR ARM FREE NOW...
SNOOKY... WASN'T BEHIND THE WALL... WASN'T EVEN IN THE HOUSE... OUT HAVING KITTENS! SNOOKY'S PIERCING SHRIEKS THEY WERE ONLY IN MY MIND! I... I ONLY IMAGINED THEM!
THIS GUY'S BATTY! THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH HIS ARM AT ALL!
HEY, LOOK! THIS CAT JUST CAME IN WITH HER NEW LITTER OF KITTENS! HERE, KITTY, KITTY...
NEVER MIND THE CAT, JOE! WE HAVE TO TAKE THIS GUY DOWN TO HEADQUARTERS! THERE'S A CORPSE BEHIND THIS WALL!
-THE END-

IT WAS THE MOST UNUSUAL FRATERNITY INITIATION EVER SEEN ON THE CAMPUS. . . OR ON ANY OTHER CAMPUS, FOR THAT MATTER! THE THREE PLEOGEES WERE TAKEN OUT TO THE OLO PALMER HOME ON THAT INFAMOUS NIGHT FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, ANO INSTEAO OF THE PLACE BEING AMUSINGLY HAUNTEO, IT TURNEO INTO A---

HOUSE OF HORROR



IT WAS ON A NIGHT IN 1934 THAT THIS STRANGE TALE HAD ITS BEGINNING! TODAY, FIFTEEN YEARS LATER, THERE IS STILL NO EXPLANATION FOR WHAT HAPPENED AT THE PALMER PLACE!






...AND AS THE LAST STEP IN YOUR HAZING, BOYS...YOU'LL HAVE TO PASS THE TEST OF COURAGE! A LONELY JOURNEY INTO THE OLD PALMER PLACE...WHICH LEGEND TELLS US IS *HAUNTED!*
EACH ONE OF YOU WILL FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS I GAVE ON THE RIDE OUT HERE! IF ANYONE WANTS TO DROP OUT NOW...LET HIM SPEAK UP OR SHUT HIS MOUTH FOR-EVER! EVERYONE READY...?
Y-YES...I-I GUESS) SO...
HERE'S YOUR LIGHT, HENDERSON... YOU MIGHT AS WELL START THE BALL ROLLING! AND REST ASSURED OF ONE THING, BOYS... THIS IS NO SCHOOLBOY PRANK...AS YOU'LL SOON LEARN! HEH, HEH!
WAVE THAT LANTERN AT US FROM THE FIRST AND SECOND LANDINGS, HENDERSON... AND JUST *COOL* YOUR HEELS IN THE ATTIC TILL I COME UP FOR YOU IF YOU'RE NOT ALREADY BATHED IN *COLD* SWEAT, THAT IS!
YOU'RE DRIVING THESE FRESHMEN PRETTY HARD, LES...YOU MUST HAVE GIVEN THIS PLACE QUITE A BUILD-UP, BECAUSE THEY LOOKED SCARED TO DEATH! FROM THE LOOK IN HENDERSON'S EYE...HE'D KILL YOU IN A MINUTE IF HE HAD THE CHANCE!
T-THERE HE IS NOW, WAVING THAT LANTERN AT THE FIRST FLOOR WINDOW!
NOW THE FUN STARTS! I WENT THROUGH THAT PLACE LAST WEEK...RIGGED A FEW CONTRAPTIONS FOR THE BOYS TO TRIP OVER! OUGHT TO BE GOOD FOR SOME LAUGHS BEFORE THE EVENING'S OVER!
THERE HE IS AGAIN... POOR KID MUST HAVE RAN ALL THE WAY UP TO THE SECOND FLOOR! AS IF THERE WAS A A GHOST BEHIND 'IM!
2


THERE MAY BE MORE THAN GHOSTS BEHIND 'IM BOYS HEH, HEH!
ONE OF 'EM MAY HAVE GOTTEN HENDERSON THEN 'CAUSE IT'S BEEN SEVERAL MINUTES SINCE WE SAW HIM AT THE SECOND FLOOR...AND IT DOESN'T TAKE THAT LONG TO GET UP TO THE ATTIC!
JUST A BOYISH PRANK, THAT'S ALL! THINKS HE'LL TURN THE TABLES AND SCARE US A BIT! PROBABLY SITTING UP THERE IN THE ATTIC, WAITING TO JUMP OUT AND YELL BOO AT ME WHEN I COME UP TO RELIEVE HIM!
SO WE'LL HAVE A LITTLE CHANGE OF PLANS...TO MEET THE EMERGENCY! INSTEAD OF LES WILTON GOING UP THERE...WE'LL PICK THE SECOND PLEDGEE! HEY... WATERS!
M-ME? Y-YEAH... BE RIGHT THERE!
I DON'T KNOW HOW HE DID IT... BUT WILTON'S GOT THESE FRESHMEN SHAKING IN THEIR BOOTS! NO GUY WOULD NORMALLY TREMBLE AT THE THOUGHT OF A HAUNTED HOUSE...UNLESS HE THOUGHT THERE WAS DIRTY WORK AFOOT!
HMMM... MAYBE THERE IS!
HEH HEH! LOOK AT HIS FACE, WILL YOU! IMAGINE THAT, A GROWN MAN, SHAKING LIKE A TEEN-AGE GAL GOING PAST A GRAVEYARD!
I'M BEGINNING TO THINK THAT I WOULDN'T LIKE THIS SET-UP MYSELF!
ΓΔ
WHAT IN THE WORLD DID YOU DO TO THAT HOUSE, WILTON? THESE BOYS HAVE A LOOK OF ABSOLUTE DREAD ON THEIR FACES!
AW, IT'S NOTHING! JUST A COUPLA LOOSE STEPS A FEW COBWEBS SOME SQUEAKY DOORS
I-IT'S HAPPENED AGAIN WATERS NEVER REACHED THAT ATTIC WINDOW! I DON'T LIKE THE LOOKS OF THIS
AW THEY PROBABLY TURNED RIGHT AROUND FROM THE SECOND FLOOR, AN WE'LL FIND 'EM HIDING NEAR THE FRONT DOOR! IF THESE GUYS HAVEN'T THE GUTS TO GO UP THERE, THEN THEY'RE NOT FIT TO BE GAMMA DELTAS!
3


YOU...ARLING...C'MON OVER HERE! YOU'RE NEXT, MAN. GO UP TO THAT ATTIC AND TELL THOSE PALS OF YOURS TO STOP THEIR MONKEY-SHINES! THIS IS A FRATERNITY INITATION...NOT A SCHOOLBOY PRANK!
I-I DON'T THINK I... I C...CARE! YOU'LL GO ALL RIGHT... OR THEY'LL FIND YOU IN A DITCH! I DIDN'T RIG UP THIS PLACE JUST TO HAVE A COUPLA PUNKS SPOIL OUR FUN! IF THE THREE OF YOU ARE PLANNING TO GIVE *ME* A SCARE...YOU'LL REGRET IT!
W..WE DIDN'T PLAN ANY JOKES LIKE T...THAT! AND I DON'T LIKE THE LOOKS OF THIS... IT'S N... NOT LIKE WATERS AND HENDERSON TO FOOL AROUND! B...BUT I'LL GO!
SPOKEN LIKE A REAL GAMMA DELT- TO BE!
HEH, HEH! LOOK AT 'IM SHAKING! BET THE OTHER TWO'LL HAVE A BIG SURPRISE FOR ARLING... THINKING IT'S THEIR BELOVED LES WILTON!
MAYBE THE KID'S RIGHT, LES ...MAYBE SOMETHING *DID* GO WRONG UP THERE!
RATS! NOTHING'S WRONG UP THERE... ARLING'S AT THE FIRST FLOOR SAFE AND SOUND! FROM THE LOOK ON HIS FACE HE MUST HAVE STUMBLED OVER THAT SKELETON I BORROWED FROM THE LAB, TOO!
HE'S AT THE SECOND FLOOR...
ON HIS WAY TO THE ATTIC! HOLD YOUR BREATH, BOYS.. HERE'S WHERE THE *REAL* FUN BEGINS.. IN THE NEXT SIXTY SECONDS.
FIVE MINUTES, WILTON...AND NO SIGN OF ARLING! ALL THREE OF 'EM.. *GONE!*
THE STUPID PUNKS...TOO YELLOW TO TAKE THAT LAST FLIGHT OF STEPS! I'LL SHOW 'EM *REAL* FEAR.


GIMME THAT LIGHT, JENKINS... I'LL GO UP THERE MYSELF! FIRST TO PROVE TO ALL OF YOU THAT THERE'S NO DANGER UP THERE... AND SECOND, TO KICK THOSE GUYS OUT OF THAT PLACE... AND OUT OF THE GAMMA DELTA!
MAYBE WE SHOULDN'T HAVE LET WILTON PLAN THIS WHOLE INITIATION BY HIMSELF! HE'S LIABLE TO GO OVERBOARD ON THIS HAZING BUSINESS...THE BOYS IN THAT HOUSE MAY HAVE HURT THEMSELVES!
FOR ALL WE KNOW HE MIGHT HAVE STUCK SOME RATTLESNAKES IN THE OLD DUMP!
CRASH!
W...WHAT TH...?
I TOLD YOU I DIDN'T LIKE THIS WHOLE SET-UP! THE WINDOW...IT'S BEEN SMASHED!
I...IT'S WILTON...
THOUGHT I'D INJECT A LITTLE EXCITEMENT INTO THIS INITIATION... DO I LOOK ANY THE WORSE FOR WEAR?
NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT HERE ON THE SECOND FLOOR EITHER
CRASH
THE SECONDS TICKED BY IN THAT LONELY AREA KNOWN AS PALMER'S PLACE... SECONDS BECAME MINUTES ... AND THE MINUTES STRETCHED INTERMINABLY
FIFTEEN MINUTES SINCE WE SAW WILTON!
T... THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG UP THERE!
SOMETHING'S GOING ON IN THAT HOUSE THAT WE DON'T KNOW ABOUT! AND THE WAY THOSE THREE FRESHMAN HATED WILTON... THEY MAY HAVE GIVEN HIM A BAD BEATING!
I... I HOPE IT'S ONLY THAT! LET'S HURRY!



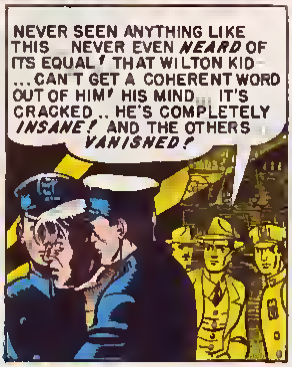




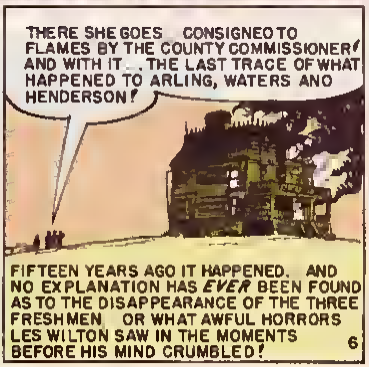




WITHIN HALF-AN-HOUR THE POLICE HAD ARRIVED AT PALMER'S PLACE... AND A THROUGH SEARCH OF THE PREMISES REVEALED ONE STARTLING FACT.



AGAIN AND AGAIN THE POLICE SEARCHED THE BUILDING THE NEXT FEW DAYS BUT NO FURTHER INFORMATION WAS UNCOVERED... AND THEN, ABOUT A WEEK AFTER THE NIGHT OF HORROR...



OUT OF THE GRAVE

The Thing stirred slowly, the dirt against its mouth and body. It pushed upward, clawing. Slowly the earth gave way, and clean fresh air seeped down into the shallow grave . . .

He got to his feet clumsily. Stood erect in the moonlight, seeing the trees all around him, hearing the croaking of the bullfrogs by the lake-shore. The wind rustled his rotting garments. He lifted his head, stood listening. He could not hear that cry now. But down there, down in that shallow grave where he had lain for weeks, he had heard a scream. A scream that made him seek the open air.

He was dead. He knew that. But inside him there was a power that let him move, that stirred his rotting legs and arms, that let his sightless eyes see and his shredded ears hear.

Who was he? He did not remember his name, or anything about himself. The fact that he could see and walk, that something had summoned him, was all he could know.

He moved forward at a stumbling walk. He must find whatever it was that brought him back from the dead, that made him walk the earth again, a horrible figment from a distorted nightmare.

When he came to the lake, he stared at his reflection in the limpid, still waters. He had no nose, and bits of flesh clung here and there to whitened skull that was beginning to show through. Where his eyes should have been, there were only twin black hollows. And his teeth gleamed white and hungry, because he had no lips.

He lifted his head. This time he heard it. A scream!

He started straight toward it, walking into the cold water, not feeling it. He stumbled over submerged logs and rocks, but he kept walking at that slow, steady pace. Stumbling forward, always moving.

* * *

The man tied a gag around her lips so she could not scream again. He said, "It's all over, Marie. No sense yelling. No one can hear you in these woods. That's why my little cabin here comes in so handy. I -ah- write finish to a few of my better jobs."

"Jim," the girl whimpered, arching her neck to avoid the gag. "Jim will save me. You can't kill me . . . Jim will save me."

The man laughed. "Jim is dead, Marie. I killed him. If I hadn't finished *him*, maybe I couldn't get rid of *you*. He would come after me . . . try to get revenge. This way, it's safe."

"Jim said he would protect me. That . . . *wherever he was* . . he would know when I was in danger and come to save me!"

The man tied the gag so she could not speak again. Her wrists and legs were tied to a heavy log chair. The man stood back and nodded.

"With you out of the way, Marie, your inheritance will revert to me,

your cousin. It will be very legal. I will wait seven years and have you declared legally dead. In the meantime, I will enjoy the estate as its trustee. I will not hurry. I am not too greedy. No one will ever know I killed you!"

The man went to a coal stove and lifted out a pine branch smeared with pitch. The branch was flaming, the red tongues of fire casting a scarlet glow around the room. He went and touched the blazing branch to the tiny bed, to the rug on the floor and the curtains on the window. The room caught fire. It swirled up, hot and eager, eating the logs and the furniture. He had prepared well. Everything was drenched in kerosene.

The man tossed the burning tree-limb on the floor. He backed out the door; stood there a minute, watching the fire leap and roar.

"Two and a half million dollars," he said to the wide-eyed, almost fainting girl. "That's what I'm getting out of this. I buried your Jim a few miles back in the densest part of these woods. Maybe the fire I'm starting will burn him too . . . because the woods will go up like paper!"

The heat was awful. The man turned and ran.

From the fringe of the trees, he saw the Thing coming at its stumbling, shambling gait. The Thing was looking at the burning cabin. It did not see him. The man put his hands over his mouth. He was sick. He whimpered, "Jim . . ."

* * *

The Thing went into the fire. He did not feel it licking at his clothes, at his rotting flesh. He was dead. He could not feel anything.

There! Right in front of him. He did not know the girl had fainted mercifully just before he came in the door. He did not remember who the girl was. All he knew was that a long time ago, in a different world, he had promised that no harm would come to her!

He picked the girl up, chair and all. He turned and went toward the door. His clothes flamed. His hair was gone. Even the dried strips of flesh still clinging to his body were charred. Here and there a white bit of bone protruded. Where the fire had touched the bone, it was black and scorched.

The man crouching in the underbrush screamed and screamed. He screamed as the Thing put the girl down far away from the fire. He screamed as the Thing turned its fleshless face toward him. He screamed and tried to flee as the Thing shambled toward him.

The Thing picked him up and held him clutched to the rotting chest. He went at his steady, remorseless pace, onward and onward, through the forest, carrying the man who would have inherited two and a half million dollars.

The man tried to fight, but the Thing was strong. He held the man easily.

He was still holding him when he came back to the grave. The Thing fell on top of the man, pinned him in the grave with his heavy weight.

And the Thing began, with one rotting hand, to fill the grave with loosened dirt, burying them both.

It did not take long to fill the grave. Before long, there would be two dead men in it. It was nice to have company down here where everything was cold and black.

After a while the screaming stopped. . . .

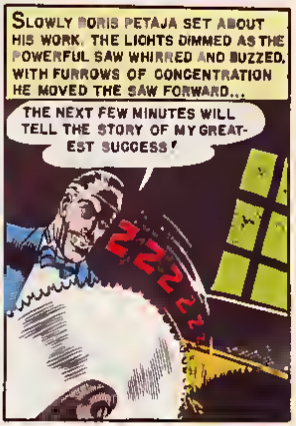

BORIS PETAJA WAS SKILLED IN THE TRICKS OF ANCIENT AND MODERN MAGIC. HIS HANDS MOVED AND HIS VOICE CALLED ON THE SPIRITS TO AID HIM. DEEP DOWN IN HIS BRAIN, SOMETHING STIRRED AND WHISPERED, THAT HIS MAGIC WAS NOT FAKED...BUT REAL! AND BROODING, BORIS PETAJA BECAME...
THE MAD MAGICIAN
AS HE BOWED TO THE APPLAUSE OF A CHEERING AUDIENCE, THE MAGICIAN SMILED COLDLY TO HIMSELF...
FOOLS! IF THEY ONLY KNEW THAT WHAT THEY THINK IS TRICKERY CAN BE DONE JUST AS WELL WITHOUT STAGE PROPS!
I SHALL PROVE IT TO THE WORLD...I, BORIS PETAJA! TONIGHT I WILL SAW A MAN IN TWO...AND THEN PUT HIM TOGETHER AGAIN...WITH NO FALSE BOTTOMED CABINET TO HELP ME!
STAGE ENTRANCE
WOOD HARRISON

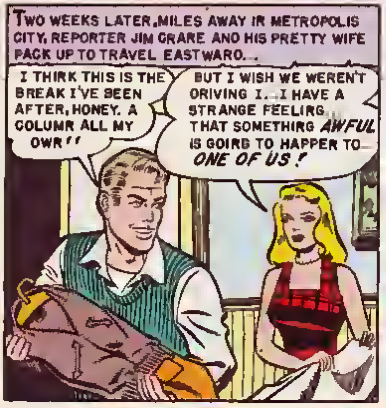

FAR UP IR THE HILLS BEYOND METRO POLIB CITY, A STORE-WALLED MAR-SION RESTLED. ITS EYRIES SWARMED WITH BATS WITHIR ITS WALLS. FROM TIME TO TIME, SCREAMS OF AGORY HAD BEER HEARD

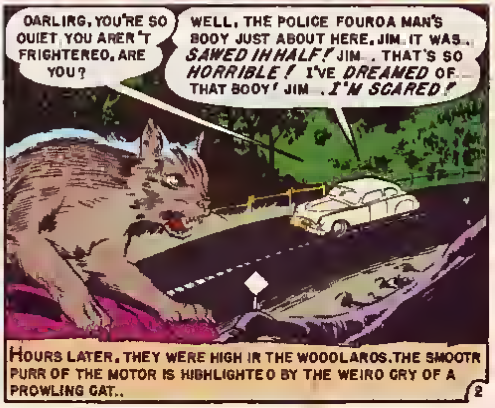

TONIGHT IS THE BIG EXPERIMENT! THE MAN I DRUGGED ON THAT MOUNTAIN ROAD IS IN CHAINS... AWAITING THE TEST. THE POWER IS ON FULL. THE ELECTRIC SAW HAS BEEN SHARPENED!

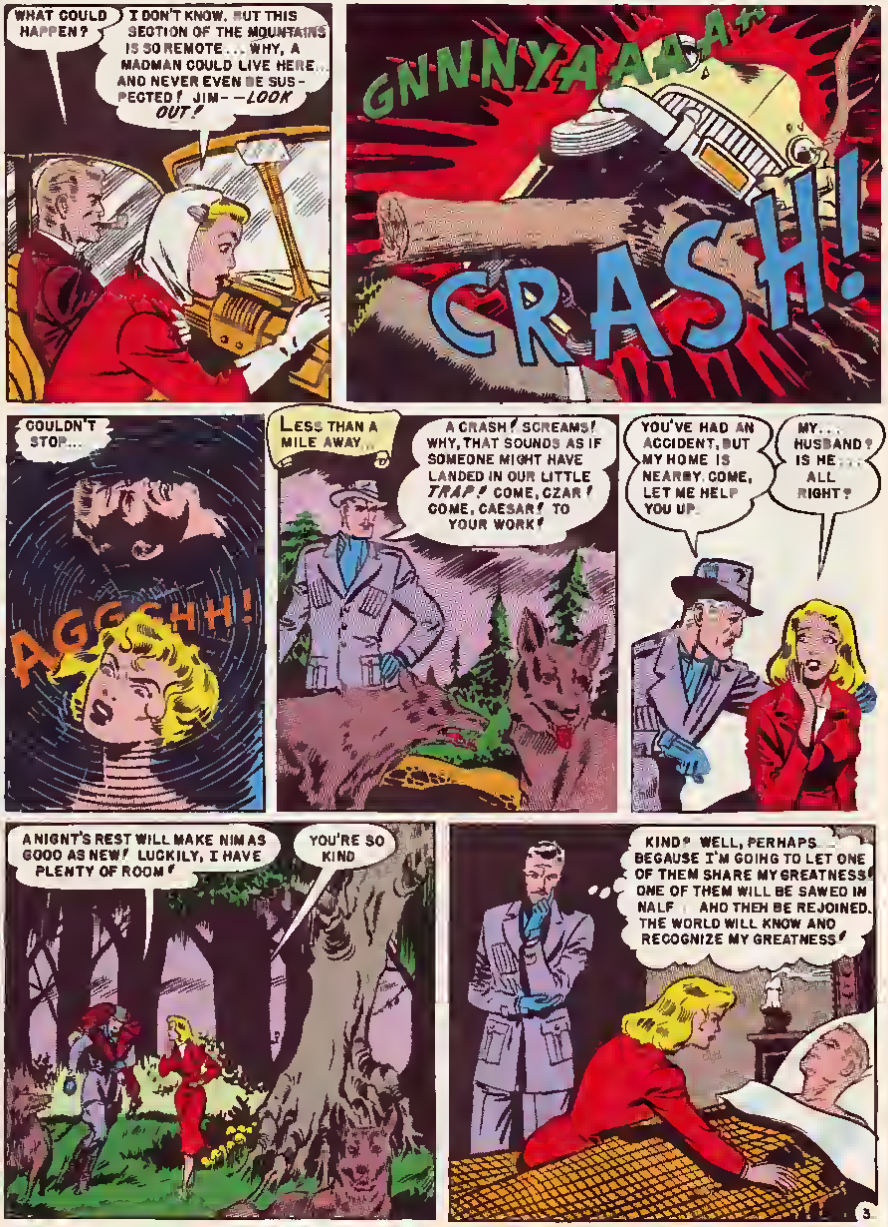

DO YOU DOUBT MY MAGICAL POWERS? I SAY YOU WILL NOT BE HURT! MY POWER IS SUCH THAT EVEN AFTER YOU HAVE BEEN SAWED IN HALF, YOU WILL BE ALIVE AND WELL!

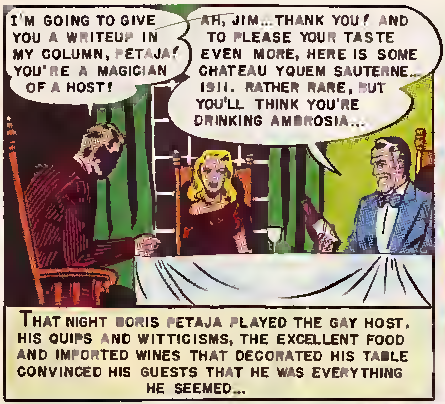

GOOD EVENING, SIR. I HURRIED AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE! NOW WE WILL BEGIN...
LOOK, MISTER, PLEASE... LEMME GO! I DON'T WANT TO BE FAMOUS LIKE YOU TOLD ME... I DON'T WANNA GET SAWED IN HALF!


SLOWLY BORIS PETAJA SET ABOUT HIS WORK. THE LIGHTS DIMMED AS THE POWERFUL SAW WHIRRED AND BUZZED, WITH FURROWS OF CONCENTRATION HE MOVED THE SAW FORWARD...
THE NEXT FEW MINUTES WILL TELL THE STORY OF MY GREATEST SUCCESS!
ZZZZZZ

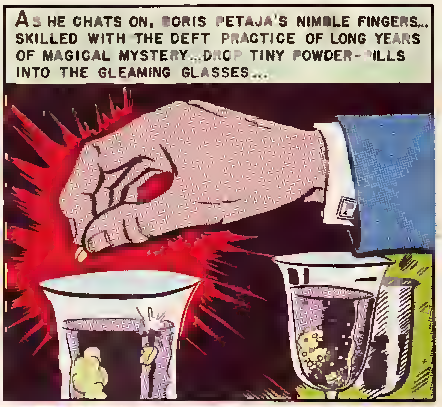

TWO WEEKS LATER, MILES AWAY IR METROPOLIS CITY, REPORTER JIM GRARE AND HIS PRETTY WIFE PACK UP TO TRAVEL EASTWARD...
I THIRK THIS IS THE BREAK I'VE BEEN AFTER, HONEY. A COLUMR ALL MY OWR''
BUT I WISH WE WEREN'T DRIVING I... I HAVE A STRANGE FEELING THAT SOMETHING AWFUL IS GOIRG TO HAPPER TO ONE OF US!


DARLIRG, YOU'RE SO QUIET. YOU AREN'T FRIGHTERED, ARE YOU?
WELL, THE POLICE FOURD A MAN'S BODY JUST ABOUT HERE, JIM. IT WAS... SAWED IR HALF! JIM... THAT'S SO HORRIBLE! I'VE DREAMED OF THAT BODY! JIM... I'M SCARED!
HOURS LATER, THEY WERE HIGH IR THE WOODLARDS. THE SMOOTR PURR OF THE MOTOR IS HIGHLIGHTED BY THE WEIRD CRY OF A PROWLING CAT...

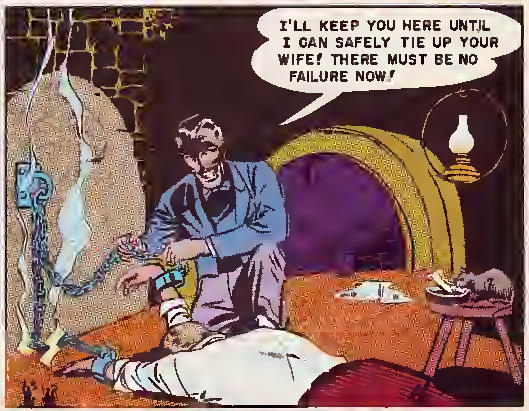

WHAT COULD HAPPEN?
I DON'T KNOW. BUT THIS SECTION OF THE MOUNTAINS IS SO REMOTE... WHY, A MADMAN COULD LIVE HERE AND NEVER EVEN BE SUSPECTED! JIM--LOOK OUT!
GNNNYAAAAA
CRASH!
COULDN'T STOP...
AGGHH!
LESS THAN A MILE AWAY...
A CRASH! SCREAMS! WHY, THAT SOUNDS AS IF SOMEONE MIGHT HAVE LANDED IN OUR LITTLE TRAP! COME, CZAR! COME, CAESAR! TO YOUR WORK!
YOU'VE HAD AN ACCIDENT, BUT MY HOME IS NEARBY. COME, LET ME HELP YOU UP.
MY... HUSBAND? IS HE... ALL RIGHT?
A NIGHT'S REST WILL MAKE NIM AS GOOD AS NEW! LUCKILY, I HAVE PLENTY OF ROOM!
YOU'RE SO KIND
KIND? WELL, PERHAPS. BEGAUSE I'M GOING TO LET ONE OF THEM SHARE MY GREATNESS! ONE OF THEM WILL BE SAWED IN NALF AND THEN BE REJOINED. THE WORLD WILL KNOW AND RECOGNIZE MY GREATNESS!

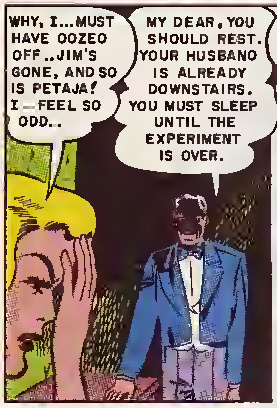


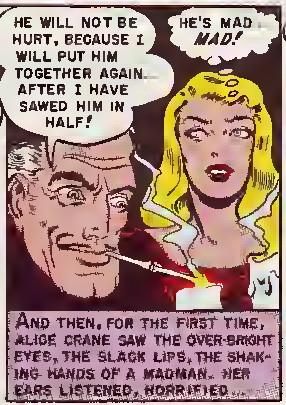
THAT NIGHT BORIS PETAJA PLAYED THE GAY HOST. HIS QUIPS AND WITTICISMS, THE EXCELLENT FOOD AND IMPORTED WINES THAT DECORATED HIS TABLE CONVINCED HIS GUESTS THAT HE WAS EVERYTHING HE SEEMED...











AND THEN, FOR THE FIRST TIME, ALICE CRANE SAW THE OVER-BRIGHT EYES, THE SLACK LIPS, THE SHAKING HANDS OF A MADMAN. HER EARS LISTENED, HORRIFIED...





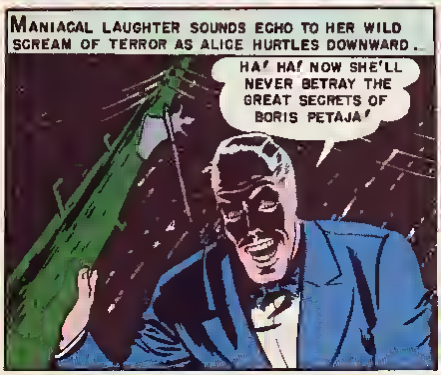
ALMOST NUMB WITH FEAR, ALICE CRANE FLED INTO THE NIGHT...

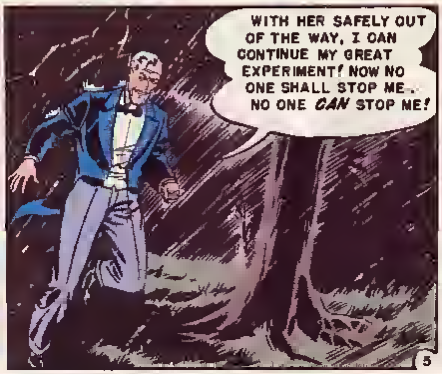


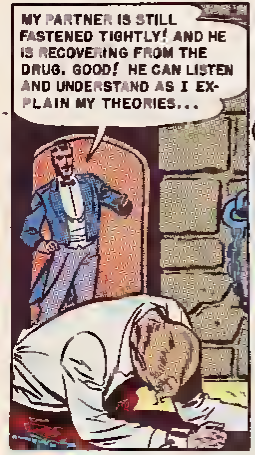




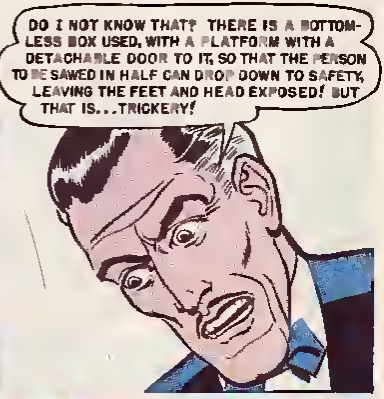


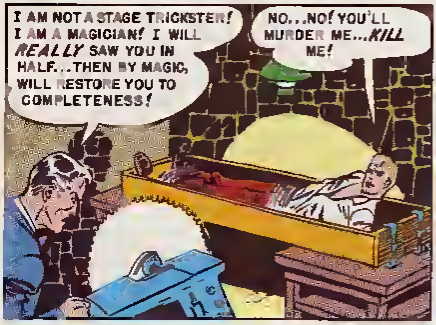





MY PARTNER IS STILL FASTENED TIGHTLY! AND HE IS RECOVERING FROM THE DRUG. GOOD! HE CAN LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND AS I EXPLAIN MY THEORIES...

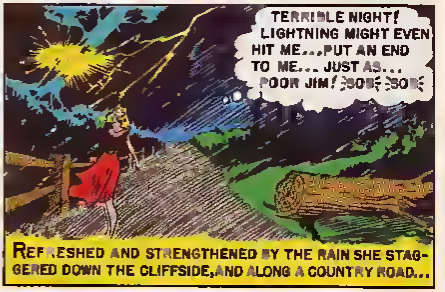

AWAKE, EH? THEN YOU'LL BE INTERESTED IN KNOWING THAT I INTEND TO SAW YOU IN HALF... THEN PUT YOU BACK TOGETHER AGAIN!
YOU...YOU CAN'T DO THAT! THAT'S ALL A TRICK!

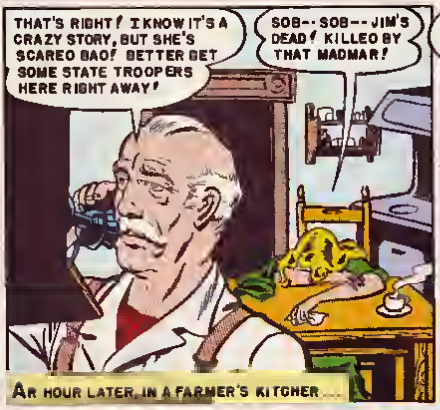

DO I NOT KNOW THAT? THERE IS A BOTTOMLESS BOX USED, WITH A PLATFORM WITH A DETACHABLE DOOR TO IT, SO THAT THE PERSON TO BE SAWED IN HALF CAN DROP DOWN TO SAFETY, LEAVING THE FEET AND HEAD EXPOSED! BUT THAT IS...TRICKERY!

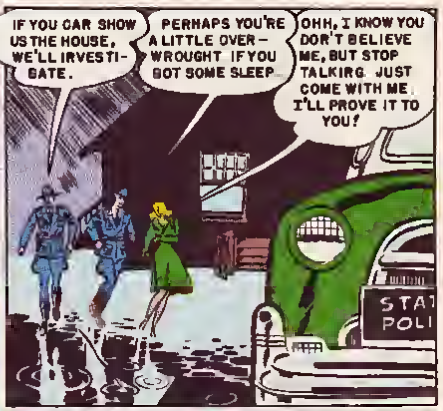

I AM NOT A STAGE TRICKSTER! I AM A MAGICIAN! I WILL REALLY SAW YOU IN HALF...THEN BY MAGIC, WILL RESTORE YOU TO COMPLETENESS!
NO...NO! YOU'LL MURDER ME...KILL ME!


SOON NOW, THE WORLD WILL RECOGNIZE THE GREATNESS OF PETAJA! SOON, THEY WILL BEHOLD THE MIRACLE OF A MAN SAWED IN HALF... AND PUT BACK TOGETHER AGAIN!
ZZZZZ
EVEN AS THE ROTATING SAW BIT DEEP INTO THE WOODEN BOX, JUST AS IT WAS ABOUT TO DIG INTO HIS SIDE... JIM CRANE FAINTED...

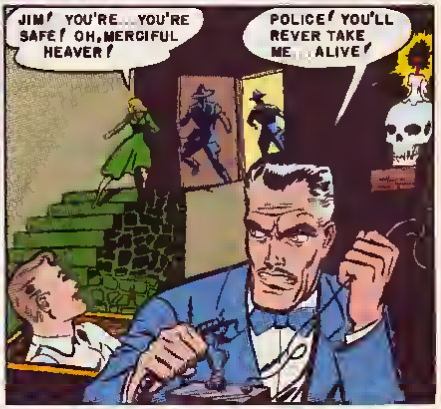

AS THE RAIN MELTED DOWNWARD, IT BATHED THE CRUMPLED FORM OF ALICE CRANE WHERE SHE LAY HUDDLED ACROSS A CLIFF-GROWING TREE...
NO USE HURRYING! JIM'S... DEAD...BY NOW! BUT MAYBE I CAN GET THE POLICE...PUT THAT MAD FIEND...BEHIND BARS!


TERRIBLE NIGHT! LIGHTNING MIGHT EVEN HIT ME...PUT AN END TO ME... JUST AS... POOR JIM! SOB SOB
REFRESHED AND STRENGTHENED BY THE RAIN SHE STAGGERED DOWN THE CLIFFSIDE, AND ALONG A COUNTRY ROAD...

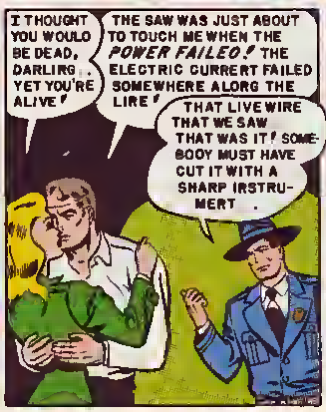

THAT'S RIGHT! I KNOW IT'S A CRAZY STORY, BUT SHE'S SCAREO BAO! BETTER GET SOME STATE TROOPERS HERE RIGHT AWAY!
SOB-- SOB-- JIM'S DEAD! KILLEO BY THAT MADMAR!
AR HOUR LATER, IN A FARMER'S KITCHER....

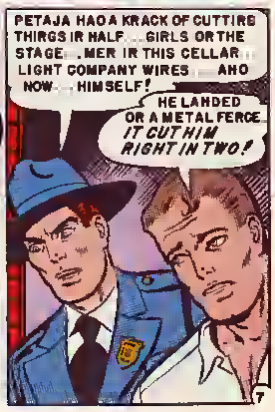

IF YOU CAR SHOW US THE HOUSE, WE'LL IRVESTI-GATE.
PERHAPS YOU'RE A LITTLE OVER-WROUGHT IF YOU GOT SOME SLEEP.
OHH, I KNOW YOU DOR'T BELIEVE ME, BUT STOP TALKIRG. JUST COME WITH ME. I'LL PROVE IT TO YOU!
STAT
POLI


A LIVE WIRE! I'LL REPORT IT, SOON AS WE GET TO THAT HOUSE!


JIM! YOU'RE... YOU'RE SAFE! OH, MERCIFUL HEAVER!
POLICE! YOU'LL REVER TAKE ME... ALIVE!


YOU STUPIO FOOLS! NO ORE APPRECIATES MY GERIUS!
STOP HIM! HE'S GOING TO... JUMP!

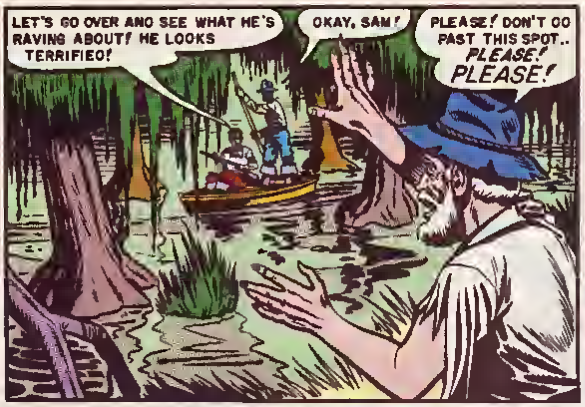

I THOUGHT YOU WOULO BE DEAD, DARLING... YET YOU'RE ALIVE!
THE SAW WAS JUST ABOUT TO TOUCH ME WHEN THE POWER FAILEO! THE ELECTRIC CURRERT FAILED SOMEWHERE ALORG THE LIRE!
THAT LIVE WIRE THAT WE SAW THAT WAS IT! SOME-BOOY MUST HAVE CUT IT WITH A SHARP IRSTRU-MERT.


PETAJA HAOA KRACK OF CUTTIRG THIRGS IR HALF... GIRLS OR THE STAGE... MER IR THIS CELLAR... LIGHT COMPANY WIRES... AHO NOW... HIMSELF!
HE LAHDED OR A METAL FERCE. IT CUT HIM RIGHT IN TWO!

PERHAPS YOU HAVE NEVER HEARD THE LEGENDS ABOUT THE OKEFENOKEE SWAMP...HOW MEN HAVE GONE INTO THAT 40 MILE STRETCH OF BOGS, QUICKSAND, WATER, AND OVERGROWTH AND NEVER CAME OUT! HERE IS THE *REAL* STORY BEHIND THESE LEGENDS!

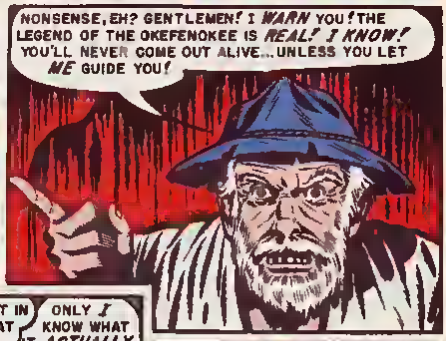
THE THING IN THE SWAMP!




LET'S GO OVER AND SEE WHAT HE'S RAVING ABOUT! HE LOOKS TERRIFIED!
OKAY, SAM!
PLEASE! DON'T GO PAST THIS SPOT.. PLEASE! PLEASE!


WHAT'S THE TROUBLE, OLD MAN?
YOU MUSTN'T GO ON INTO THE SWAMP! YOU'LL NEVER COME OUT ALIVE IF YOU DO!


LOOK, STRANGER! WE'VE HEARD ALL ABOUT THIS SWAMP! ALL ABOUT PEOPLE WHO GO INTO IT AND ARE NEVER SEEN AGAIN!
...BUT WE THINK IT'S ALL NONSENSE! I'VE MAPPED OUR TRIP SO FAR! IT'LL BE A SIMPLE MATTER TO RETRACE OUR STEPS...


NONSENSE, EH? GENTLEMEN! I *WARN* YOU! THE LEGEND OF THE OKEFENOKEE IS *REAL!* I *KNOW!* YOU'LL NEVER COME OUT ALIVE... UNLESS YOU LET *ME* GUIDE YOU!


OH, I GET IT NOW! LOOKIN' FOR A FAST BUCK... THAT'S ALL!
NO! NO! YOU'RE *WRONG!* I'LL DO IT FOR *NOTHING!*


JUST WHAT *IS* IT IN THIS SWAMP THAT PEOPLE ARE SO AFRAID OF?
ONLY *I* KNOW WHAT IT *ACTUALLY* IS...


TELL US, OLD MAN! WHAT IS IT?
COME INTO MY SHACK... AND I'LL RELATE THE WHOLE STORY...

THE OLD MAN LEADS THE OTHER TWO INTO HIS CRUDE HUT / THEY SEAT THEMSELVES ON ROUGHLY HEWN CHAINS / THEN THE OLD ONE BEGINS TO SPEAK. .

ABOUT TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, THREE PEOPLE CAME TO THIS PART OF THE OKEFENOKEE... THREE SCIENTISTS / ONE WAS MIDDLE-AGED, ONE WAS A YOUNG WOMAN, HIS DAUGHTER, AND THE THIRD ... A YOUNG MAN.. THE GIRL'S FIANCEE...

"THEY HAD A *DREAM*, THESE THREE / THEY WERE GOING TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM THAT HAD *BAFFLED* SCIENCE FOR *CENTURIES* ! THEY WERE GOING TO SOLVE THE SECRET OF *LIFE*... ! /

BUT, WHY *THIS* GOD-FORSAKEN PLACE, FATHER ?

HERE, WE CAN WORK UNDISTURBED BY OUT-SIDERS, MARIE / NO PUBLICITY.. NO REPORTERS .NO PRYING EYES /

YES, MARIE / AFTER ALL, WE WOULD RECEIVE A GREAT DEAL OF CRITICISM / TO *CREATE* LIVING MATTER... TO CREATE *LIFE*... IS SOMETHING THAT IS CONSIDERED *BEYOND* THE REALM OF SCIENCE...

SO YOU SEE, MARIE, WE MUST SEPARATE OUR-SELVES FROM SOCIETY... AT LEAST FOR A WHILE...

"AND SO, PROFESSOR CARL WARD, MARIE WARD AND ROBERT COLBY SET TO WORK, BUILDING A LABORATORY... HERE... HERE IN THE OKEFENOKEE.

AT LAST.. WE ARE FINISHED /

NOW WE CAN UNPACK OUR EQUIPMENT... ALL OUR APPARATUS... AND BEGIN OUR WORK /

"THEIR EXPERIMENTING BEGAN..."

WE *KNOW* WHAT PROTOPLASM... LIVING TISSUE . CONTAINS / WE HAVE ANALYZED IT AND WE KNOW *EVERY* CHEMICAL... IN ITS *PROPER PROPORTION* / AND YET WHEN WE PLACE THEM TOGETHER... COMBINE THEM... THEY DO NOT BEGIN TO ..TO . *LIVE* / THERE IS ONE 'ELEMENT' MISSING ..

THE SPARK OF LIFE, EH, PROFESSOR?

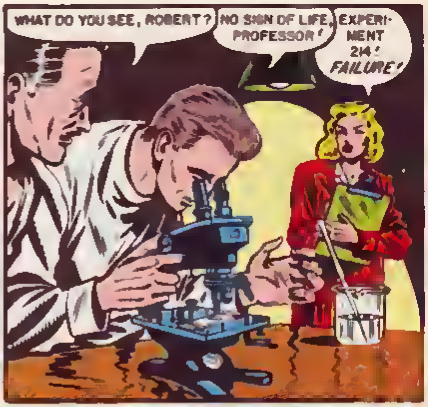
EXACTLY / WE ARE LACKING A CERTAIN CONDITION / A CERTAIN STIMULUS /

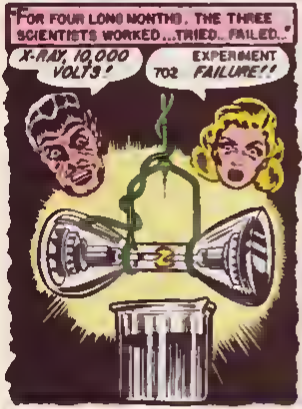
PERHAPS.. ELECTRICITY, FATHER ? PERHAPS IF WE *SHOCKED* THIS COMBINATION OF COMPOUNDS AND ELEMENTS... THE LIVING PROCESS WOULD *BEGIN*...

WE WILL TRY IT, MARIE / WE WILL TRY EVERY-THING / THE CONDITION OR STIMULANT IS WHAT WE *MUST* DISCOVER...

"IN THE DAYS AND WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED THEY TRIED EVERYTHING"...















IN A FIT OF RAGE, PROFESSOR WARD HAD FLUNG THE BEAKER CONTAINING THEIR PRECIOUS COMBINATIONS OF CHEMICALS THROUGH THE WINDOW INTO THE STAGNANT, MURKY WATERS OF THE SWAMP

SLOWLY THE BEAKER SANK... AND THE MIXTURE SPREAD OVER THE SURFACE OF THE STILL WATER...

LAZILY... IT DRIFTED ALONG, COMING TO REST NEAR A ROTTED LOG...

AND THEN... IT *HAPPENED!* THERE, IN THE DANK, DARK WATERS OF THE SWAMP... IN THE HEAT... AND THE STENCH... AND THE DAMPNESS... IT *HAPPENED!* UNKNOWN... UNEXPLAINED... THE CONDITION THAT *THEY* HAD TRIED FOR FIVE LONG MONTHS TO CREATE... CAME ABOUT...

IT *LIVED!* THE SMALL MIXTURE OF CHEMICALS AND BASIC ELEMENTS BEGAN TO *LIVE!* A SIMPLE FORM OF LIFE... WITH NO STRUCTURE! JUST A SHAPELESS, AMOEBA-LIKE MASS OF LIVING PROTOPLASM!

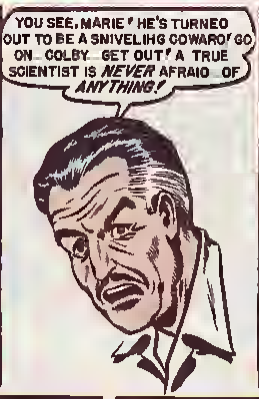
AT FIRST, IT REMAINED SMALL, FEEDING ON MICROSCOPIC ORGANISMS! BUT THEN, AS IT GREW... LARGER AND LARGER... IT SEEKED LARGER FOOD... SMALL FISH... INSECTS! IT ENVELOPED THEM... AS AN AMOEBA DOES... SECRETING DIGESTIVE JUICES THAT DISSOLVE THE VICTIMS INTO A FORM MORE EASILY *ABSORBED*...

AND STILL IT GREW, UNCONTROLLED, BIGGER... BIGGER! IT MOVED ABOUT NOW... OUT OF THE WATER ONTO THE LAND... ENVELOPING AND ABSORBING EVERYTHING IN ITS PATH...


MEANWHILE, PROFESSOR WARD AND HIS DAUGHTER HAD MET WITH A NEW PROBLEM! ROBERT COLBY!
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, COLBY?
EXACTLY WHAT I MEAN! I'M QUITTING! THIS...THIS THING WE'RE TRYING TO DO...! IT'S...IT'S... WRONG!

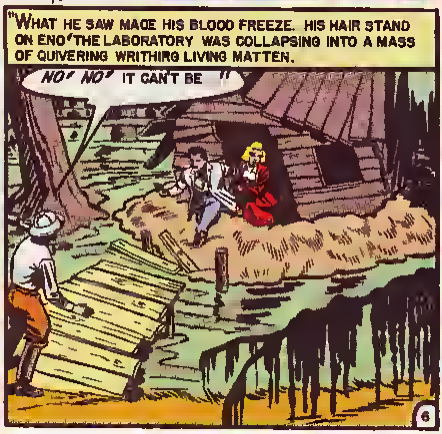

A SCIENTIST...TALKING LIKE THAT! WHAT'S COME OVER YOU, COLBY?
I...I DON'T KNOW! ONLY I'M GETTING OUT... BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE...


ARE YOU COMING WITH ME, MARIE?
BUT...BUT BOB!


YOU SEE, MARIE! HE'S TURNED OUT TO BE A SNIVELING COWARD! GO ON...COLBY...GET OUT! A TRUE SCIENTIST IS NEVER AFRAID...OF ANYTHING!


ARE YOU COMING, MARIE?
MY PLACE IS HERE, ROBERT...WITH MY FATHER AND OUR WORK! YOU'D BETTER GO...!


COLBY TURNED AND LEFT! HE CROSSED THE RICKETY WALK FROM THE HOUSE OVER THE SWAMP TO THE BANK! SUDDENLY HE HEARD A TERRIFIED SCREAM...
EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEK!
WHAT THE...?


WHAT HE SAW MADE HIS BLOOD FREEZE. HIS HAIR STAND ON END! THE LABORATORY WAS COLLAPSING INTO A MASS OF QUIVERING WRITHING LIVING MATTER.
NO! NO! IT CAN'T BE...!

PROFESSOR WARD AND MARIE BOTH SCREAMING HYSTERICALLY, WERE BEING SUCKED INTO THAT HUGE BLOB OF LIVING MATTER! HELPLESS TO DO ANYTHING, COLBY STOOD, TERRIFIED WATCHING IT ALL

...AS A FINAL MUFFLED CRY ECHOED THROUGH THE SILENT SWAMP AND THE CLAWING, CLUTCHING HAND OF PROFESSOR WARD DISAPPEARED INTO THE RIPPLING MASS!"

SO YOU SEE GENTLEMEN, THAT IS WHAT AWAITS YOU IN THE DEEP DARK DEPTHS OF THE OKEFENOKEE! THE LIFE THAT THEY HAD HELPED TO CREATE, AND THAT HAD DESTROYED PROFESSOR WARD AND HIS DAUGHTER, WAITS TO DESTROY YOU.

THAT'S QUITE A YARN, OLD TIMER, BUT IF YOU DON'T MIND, I FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE...

YEAH! LET'S GO SAM!

REMEMBER, GENTLEMEN, I WARNED YOU! YOU SEE—MY NAME IS ROBERT COLBY!

SURE, OLD MAN... SURE!

THE TWO MEN PUSH THEIR FLATBOTTOM BOAT OUT INTO THE STREAM. THEIR LAUGHTER DRIFTING ACROSS THE STAGNANT SILENT WATER! SLOWLY, THEY MAKE THEIR WAY UPSTREAM! SUDDENLY.

COLBY! HE SAID HIS NAME WAS COLBY! THAT WAS THE NAME OF THE YOUNG SCIENTIST THAT ESCAPED—THE THE—SAM!! LOOK!!

WHA ? WHY NO NO! NO! IT'S.. IT'S...THE... THING..

THE END

WELL, DEAR READERS! DID YOU LIKE THIS STORY? DID YOU LIKE THE OTHER STORIES IN THIS BOOK? WON'T YOU *VOTE* FOR YOUR FAVORITE SO WE CAN SEE THE *KIND* OF STORIES *YOU WANT*? WRITE US AND TELL US WHICH ONE YOU LIKED BEST!

1. *THE WALL* (A PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY)
2. *THE MAD MAGICIAN* (AN ADVENTURE IN HORROR)
3. *THE HOUSE OF HORROR* (A JOURNEY INTO THE SUPER-NATURAL)
4. *THE THING IN THE SWAMP* (A SCIENTIFID SUSPENSTORY)


The
Old Witch

FEAR

HERE ARE TALES THAT WILL USHER YOU INTO

THE HAUNT OF FEAR

AN ENTERTAINING COMIC

NO. 16
JULY-AUG.

AUTHORIZED A C M P
CONFORMS to the COMICS CODE

10¢

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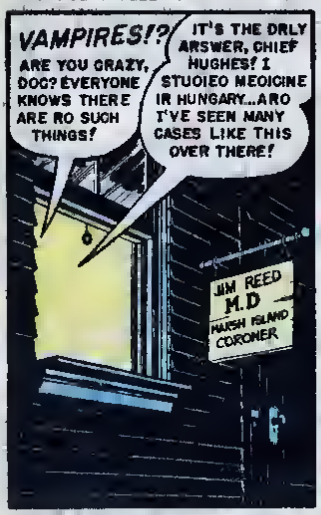
- THE CRYPT OF TERROR
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- THE VAULT OF HORROR
- WEIRD SCIENCE
- WEIRD FANTASY
- MODERN LOVE

Haunt of Fear, July-Aug. 1950—Vol. 1, No. 16. Published Bi-monthly by Fables Publishing Co., Inc. at 225 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y. William M. Gaines, Editor. Albert B. Feldstein, Associate Editor. Application as second class matter pending at the Post Office at New York, N. Y. One year subscription in the U. S. 60c plus 15c postage—total 75c—elsewhere $1.50. Entire contents copyrighted 1950 by Fables Publishing Co., Inc. Printed in U. S. A.

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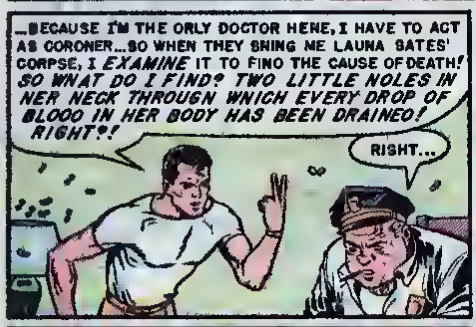

VAMPIRE!
A JOURNEY INTO THE SUPERNATURAL
JOHNNY CRAIG

MARSH ISLAND... A PATCH OF LAND OFF THE COAST OF LOUISIANA, INFESTED WITH SWAMPS, QUAGMIRES AND MALARIA-CARRYING MOSQUITOS, WHERE THE ONLY CHANGE FOR THE FEW INHABITANTS FROM THE BLAZING, SWELTERING, HEAT OF DAY IS THE MOIST, STICKY, UNCOMFORTABLE HEAT OF NIGHT, AND WHERE BIZARRE AND MYSTERIOUS SETTINGS MIGHT VERY WELL FORM A PERFECT BACKDROP FOR...

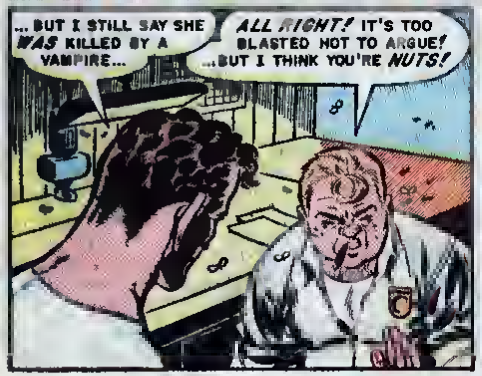


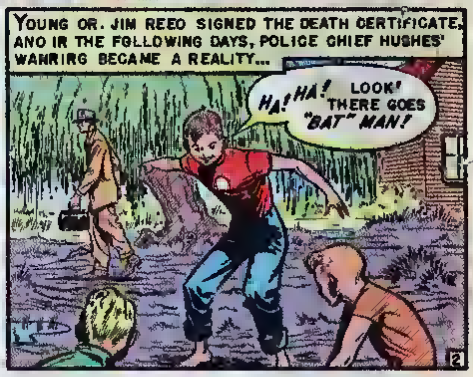


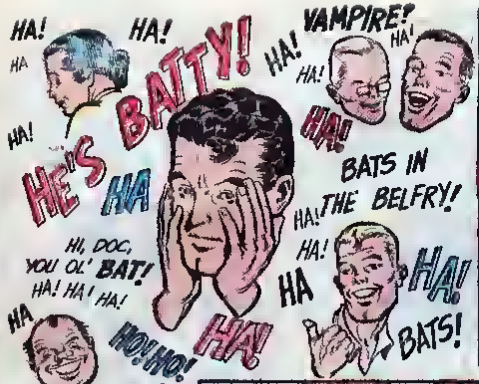


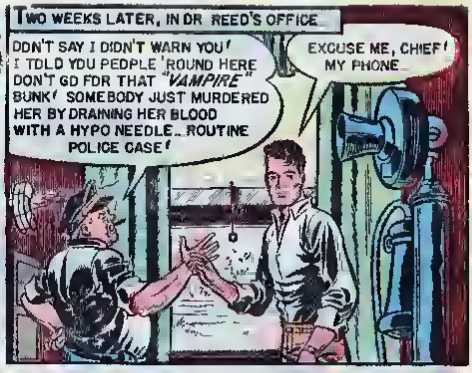


















JONATHAN WINSLOW LIVED DEEP IN THE TANGLED SECLUSION OF THE MURKY SWAMP. HE SELDOM CAME TO TOWN AND MOST PEOPLE HAD NEVER SEEN HIM OR HIS DAUGHTER AT ALL. THE MOON WAS HIGH IN THE HEAVENS WHEN DR REED FINALLY EMERGED FROM THE TREACHEROUS PATHS OF THE BAYOU AND RAPPED ON THE AGED WOODEN DOOR

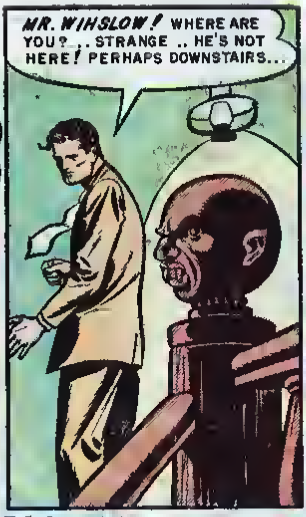





THIS IS HER ROOM, DOCTOR. I'LL WAIT OUTSIDE...
SHE'S BEAUTIFUL!
I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYONE SO LOVELY! I.. WHAT THE?...HER NECK! THERE ARE TWO SMALL HOLES IN HER NECK!
DR. REED MADE A COMPLETE EXAMINATION AND WHEN HE HAD FINISHED..
JUST AS I THOUGHT! SHE'S PERFECTLY WELL... EXCEPT THAT SHE'S LOST A LOT OF BLOOD... I SUSPECT SHE'S SLOWLY BEING ROBBED OF IT BY A VAMPIRE!
YOU WERE IN THERE QUITE SOME TIME, DR. REED.. ANYTHING SERIOUSLY WRONG?
ER.. YOUR DAUGHTER ISN'T AS WELL AS SHE SHOULD BE! I.. I SUGGEST YOU SIT UP WITH HER TONIGHT.. I DON'T WANT ANYTHING TO DISTURB HER! I'LL DROP BY AGAIN TOMORROW.
ER.. TOMORROW? NOT DURING THE DAY, I TRUST! PLEASE.. COME IN THE EVENING! I'M NOT.. ALWAYS HERE DURING THE DAY!
NOT ALWAYS HERE? ??? OH, ER.. SURE! TOMORROW NIGHT, THEN. GOODBYE MR. WINSLOW...
THAT NIGHT AND THE FOLLOWING DAY, DR. REED PONDERED DEEPLY AND ASKED MANY QUESTIONS...
MR. WINSLOW? OH, I'VE SEEN HIM ONCE OR TWICE... COMES IN TO BUY FOOD AND STUFF! FUNNY GUY... ALWAYS COMES AT NIGHT...
TUXEDO? YUP! ALWAYS DRESSED FIT TO KILL! DON'T THINK HE OWNS ANOTHER SUIT!
WORK? DUNNO.. NEVER SEEN HIM AT AL' DURIN' THE DAY..
HE MUST HAVE NOTICED THE TWO HOLES IN HER NECK! STILL...

DR. REED WENT TO THE OLD HOUSE AGAIN THE NEXT NIGHT AND WAS LED TO HELDA'S ROOM BY MR. WINSLOW. THE YOUNG DOCTOR MADE ANOTHER EXAMINATION...

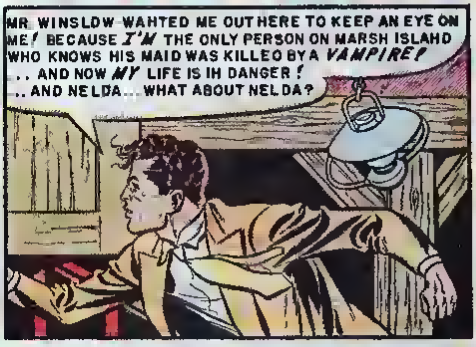




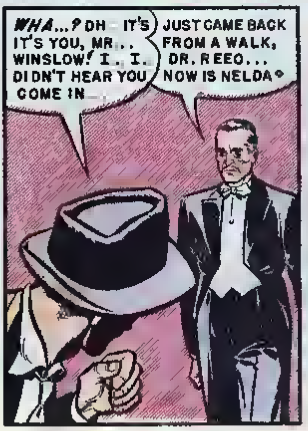
THE YOUNG DOCTOR SEARCHED, BUT OLD MR. WINSLOW WAS NOT TO BE FOUND. IT WASN'T TILL MUCH LATER THAT HE THOUGHT OF...













LORD, I HOPE I'M DOING RIGHT! WINSLOW EXPECTS ME TOMORROW NIGHT, BUT I WANT TO BE THERE DURING THE *DAY!* VAMPIRES ONLY PROWL AT NIGHT! DURING THE DAY THEY SLEEP IN THEIR COFFINS! OUCH THESE MOSQUITOS!... I'LL BRING A CROSS... AND A WOODEN STAKE TO DRIVE THROUGH HIS HEART... THE ONLY WAY TO KILL... A *VAMPIRE!*

THE FOLLOWING DAY WAS A HECTIC ONE... AND DR. REED'S ATTEMPTS TO GET TO THE HOUSE BEFORE SUNDOWN SEEMED DOOMED TO FAILURE...

OKAY! OKAY! SO IT'S ANOTHER BLOODLESS CORPSE WITH TWO HOLES IN ITS NECK! BUT IF YOU START RAVING ABOUT *VAMPIRES* AGAIN, I'LL LOCK YOU UP! HOW DET BUSY! I WANT A COMPLETE AUTOPSY REPORT BEFORE YOU LEAVE!

BUT CHIEF... IT'S SO LATE...

HOURS LATER..

I THOUGHT I'D NEVER GET HERE! *WHA...!* THE DOOR'S OPEN! I'M TOO LATE! *HE'S GONE!*

NELDA! IF HE'S HARMED HER, I'LL...

NELDA! YOU... YOU'RE SITTING UP! YOU'RE... YOU'RE FEELING BETTER!???

I FEEL FINE TONIGHT, DOCTOR! BUT WHY ARE YOU SO EXCITED?

HELDA, LISTEN TO ME! YOUR FATHER IS THE CAUSE OF YOUR ILLNESS! LITTLE BY LITTLE, HE'S BEEN DRAINING YOU OF YOUR BLOOD TO FEED HIMSELF! THAT'S WHY YOU KEPT GETTING WEAKER! YOU FEEL STRONGER TONIGHT BECAUSE *LAST* NIGHT HE CAUGHT SOMEONE ELSE! PLEASE! BELIEVE ME! IT SOUNDS HORRIBLE, BUT IT'S TRUE! YOUR FATHER IS A *VAMPIRE!*


MY...MY FATHER? I...I DON'T BELIEVE IT... I...I..
THERE ISN'T TIME TO ARGUE! JUST DO AS I SAY! AFTER I LEAVE, LOCK YOUR DOOR...AND DON'T OPEN IT TO ANYONE BUT ME!
IF I TOLD HER I WAS GOING TO KILL HER FATHER, SHE'D NEVER... WHAT'S THAT!? SOUNDS LIKE WINGS FLAPPING...
GREAT SCOTT! IT'S THE VAMPIRE! HE'S AFTER ME! THE CROSS!... WHERE'S MY CROSS?!
IT'S...IT'S WORKING! HE KNOWS HE CAN'T HARM ME NOW! HE'S...HE'S LEAVING...HE'S LEAVING!
OH, LORD...I'M SHAKING LIKE A LEAF! WAIT! I HEAR SOMEONE COMING
IT'S WINSLOW! HE'S LOOKING FOR ME! HE COULDN'T KILL ME WHEN HE WAS A BAT...SO HE CHANGED TO HIS MORTAL SELF...COMING THIS WAY!
HE'S COMING CLOSER! JUST A FEW MORE STEPS AND I'LL SHOVE THIS WOODEN STAKE RIGHT THROUGH HIS..
...HEART!
AAAGGHHH!
7


I'VE GOT YOU, YOU FIEND! I'VE GOT YOU!
DIE! DIE! DIE!
SOME TIME LATER...
DR. REED! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
NELDA...IT'S OONE! YOU...YOU'RE SAFE NOW... EVERYONE'S SAFE! I DID IT, NELDA...I...I KILLED THE VAMPIRE! I KILLED YOUR FATHER..!
I'M EXHAUSTED! WHAT A HORRIBLE EXPERIENCE!
COME... LIE ON THE COUCH! YOU MUST REST!
NELDA, I...I HAD TO KILL HIM! HE ATTACKED ME! FIRST AS A VAMPIRE BAT...THEN IN HIS MORTAL GUISE! YOU... BELIEVE ME, DON'T YOU?
YES, I BELIEVE YOU! BUT... MY FATHER WAS NOT A VAMPIRE!
HE ATTACKED YOU TONIGHT BECAUSE YOUR CROSS PREVENTED THE VAMPIRE BAT FROM KILLING YOU. HE WANTED TO PROTECT ME!
WHA...WHAT? WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
I WASN'T WEAK BECAUSE I HAD LOST BLOOD! I WAS WEAK BECAUSE I HADN'T HAD ANY IN A LONG TIME! TONIGHT I AM STRONG, NOT BECAUSE MY FATHER CAUGHT SOMEONE ELSE LAST NIGHT...BUT BECAUSE I DID!
YOU MEAN...
YES, DR. REED! I AM THE VAMPIRE! THE COFFIN IN THE CELLAR IS MINE! I FEASTED LAST NIGHT...AND TONIGHT I SHALL FEAST AGAIN...ON YOU!
YAAA-HAAHAAA!
-THE END-

IN THE JUNGLES OF THAT STILL DARK CONTINENT, AFRICA, THERE DWELL MORE TERRORS THAN CREEPING ANIMALS AND STEALTHY SNAKES! BUT THESE MEN OF VIOLENCE AND GREED WOULD NOT HEED THE SIGNALS OF...

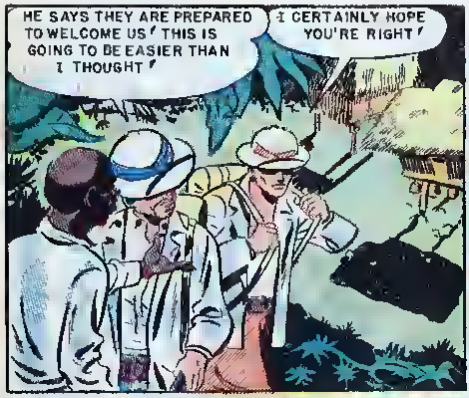
HORROR-AHEAD!



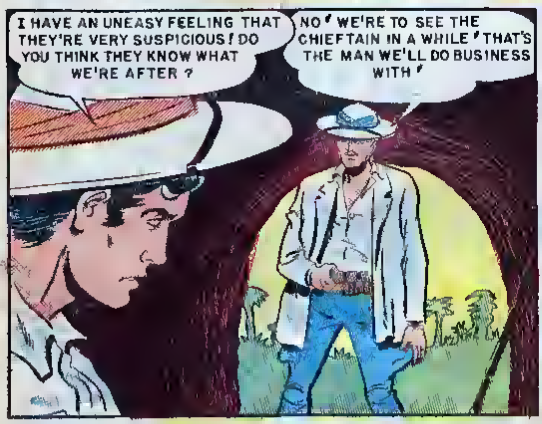

WON'T YOU GIVE ME SOME IDEA OF WHAT YOU WANT?
AS A MATTER OF FACT, I NOTICED IN YOUR WINDOW...
AH, YES, I HAVE MANY UNIQUE ITEMS, IF I MAY SAY SO, SIR!
WELL, I AM INTERESTED IN THAT HEAD... THE SHRUNKEN HEAD! I HAVEN'T SEEN MANY LIKE THAT!
the rare and unusual
AMOS AVERY - PROP.
MATTER OF TRUTH, SIR, I'M ABOUT THE ONLY CURIO DEALER IN THE COUNTRY WHO HAS ONE! THEY'RE VERY RARE, SO OF COURSE, THE PRICE
NOW LET'S NOT HAGGLE, MY GOOD MAN! I AM QUITE WILLING TO PAY WHATEVER YOU ASK!
HOWEVER, IF IT'S NOT TOO UNREASONABLE, THERE ARE SEVERAL OTHER COLLECTORS I KNOW WHO MAY WELL BE INTERESTED IN YOUR COLLECTION!
I WOULD BE VERY HAPPY TO OBLIGE YOU, SIR!
IT'S A GENUINE SAMPLE OF THE NATIVE ART!
I SAY, HOW ON EARTH DID YOU EVER COME BY SUCH AN AMAZING ITEM?
THE SEARCH FOR THIS LED ME TO THE DEPTHS OF AFRICA!
IF I COULD HEAR THE STORY, IT WOULD BE SO MUCH MORE... FASCINATING!
IT IS A BIT OF A STORY! TO TELL YOU, HOWEVER, I MUST TAKE YOU TO THAT WORLD FRAUGHT WITH DANGERS MORE HORRIBLE THAN THE SANE WOULD WANT TO BELIEVE!
AFRICA
2


COME WITH ME ON THAT SAFARI TO THE SEETHING, FETID AFRICAN JUNGLE WHICH FEW WHITE MEN HAVE DARED ENTER! BUT LET ME TELL YOU THE WHOLE STORY! IT BEGAN RIGHT HERE IN THIS VERY ROOM!
AMOS AVERY - PROP.
YOU HAVE BEEN MY ASSISTANT FOR A YEAR NOW, LESTER, BUT THERE IS STILL MUCH YOU MUST LEARN! YOU HAVE YET TO FACE THE REAL HAZARDS OF THE BUSINESS!
YES, SIR, MR AVERY!
AS YOU KNOW, IN A FEW DAYS, I'LL BE LEAVING ON MY ANNUAL TRIP TO THE INTERIOR! I HAVE DECIDED THAT YOU ARE TO GO WITH ME!
OH, THANK YOU... THANK YOU, SIR!
HEH, HEH... YOU THANK ME! BUT WAIT UNTIL YOU SEE WHAT YOU MUST FACE! BE WARNED!
BUT, SIR... WHERE ARE WE TO GO?
WHERE? TO AFRICA, MY BOY! TO PLACES CIVILIZATION HAS IGNORED! TO THE JUNGLES WHERE DWELL THE OUMBILI TRIBE!
YOU MEAN... YOU WANT THE G... GUMBILI HEADS? BUT, SIR... THEY'LL NEVER GIVE THEM TO YOU!
I DON'T CARE HOW I GET THEM! ALL MY LIFE I'VE WANTED A SAMPLE... JUST ONE... OF THOSE PRICELESS SHRUNKEN HEADS!
YES, SIR! WE'LL MAKE A FORTUNE IF WE BRING BACK EVEN ONE!
THE MEMORY OF THAT STRUGGLE THROUGH JUNGLES AND SWAMPS, FIGHTING THE TERRORS OF THE EVER-PRESENT ENEMIES.
3

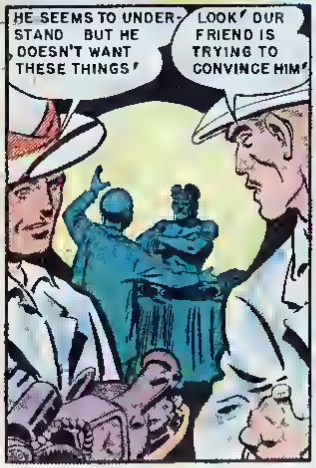

BUT CAN'T WE REST FOR JUST AWHILE, SIR? THE SUN, AND THOSE INFERNAL DRUMS... WE'LL GO MAD BEFORE WE GET THERE!
THERE WILL BE NO REST FOR US, YET! COME, STUPID OAFS... FASTER!
HE'S WILD WITH GREED! HE'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO BARGAIN WITH THOSE GUMBILIS... WE'LL LOSE OUR OWN HEADS FIRST!
HERE WE ARE! A NIGHT'S REST AND WE'LL BE ABLE TO REACH GUMBILI TERRITORY BY TOMORROW NIGHT!
I'M SO TIRED! SIGH...
I UNDERSTAND NO ONE HAS EVER BEEN ABLE TO BARGAIN WITH GUMBILIS, SIR! HOW DO YOU PLAN TO...
AHA! I AM BETTER PREPARED THAN THE STUPID FOOLS WHO HAVE TRIED BEFORE!
YOU WILL SEE HOW WE SHALL BE RECEIVED, FOR OUR CHIEF BEARER IS A FRIENDLY MEMBER OF THE GUMBILIS! HE WILL ESCORT AND INTRODUCE US!
YOU ARE CLEVER, SIR! I SHOULD NEVER HAVE THOUGHT OF THAT!
I THINK OF EVERYTHING! BUT NOW WE MUST REST, FOR TOMORROW OUR WITS MUST BE SHARP, AND OUR BRAINS AGILE!
YES, SIR! GOOD-NIGHT, SIR!
THE NEXT DAY WE BEGAN THE TREK THROUGH THE DENSE JUNGLE... JUST THE TWO OF US AND OUR GUMBILI FRIEND! CHILLS POSSESSED ME FOR I KNEW THAT THERE WERE MORE THAN ANIMAL EYES PEERING AT US FROM BEHIND THE BUSHES...

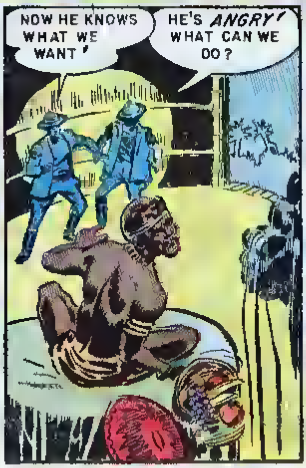

HE SAYS THEY ARE PREPARED TO WELCOME US' THIS IS GOING TO BE EASIER THAN I THOUGHT'
I CERTAINLY HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT'


WE WERE PRESENTED TO A COUNCIL OF LEADERS, THEN SHOWN TO OUR QUARTERS ..."


I HAVE AN UNEASY FEELING THAT THEY'RE VERY SUSPICIOUS! DO YOU THINK THEY KNOW WHAT WE'RE AFTER ?
NO' WE'RE TO SEE THE CHIEFTAIN IN A WHILE' THAT'S THE MAN WE'LL DO BUSINESS WITH'


"WE ENTERED THE COUNCIL HALL AND FACED THE CHIEFTIAN' BARGAINING WOULD BE DIFFICULT, BUT WE WERE DETERMINED TO SUCCEED "


HE SEEMS TO UNDERSTAND BUT HE DOESN'T WANT THESE THINGS'
LOOK' OUR FRIEND IS TRYING TO CONVINCE HIM'


NOW HE KNOWS WHAT WE WANT'
HE'S ANGRY' WHAT CAN WE DO ?




IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO GET THOSE HEADS NOW, MR AVERY!
NO, NOT IMPOSSIBLE JUST DIFFICULT! BUT WE'LL GET THEM IF WE HAVE TO STEAL!
LATER THAT NIGHT
HERE! TAKE THESE AND I'LL GET SOME MORE!
YES, YES, AS MANY AS YOU CAN BUT HURRY!
EEEK!
AIEEE!
BANG
GASP! THAT WAS THE CHIEF I KILLED! GOT TO GET AWAY! GASP!
THOSE SCREAMS... IT'S LESTER! THEY'LL KILL HIM! THEY'LL SHRINK HIS... NO! IT'S TOO HORRIBLE... GASP!
AGHH
SEVERAL WEEKS LATER
GLAD I GOT THOSE TWO HEADS AT LEAST... POOR LESTER! UGGH, WHAT WAS THAT? THOUGHT I HEARD... SOMETHING'S FOLLOWING ME! GOT TO GET OUT!
KEEP THINKING ABOUT GHOSTS, LESTER. HIS SCREAMS! NO! MUSTN'T THINK! BETTER GET BACK TO THE SHOP!
6


...BUT IF I HADN'T LEFT LESTER, THEY WOULD HAVE GOTTEN ME! THEY WOULD HAVE.. YEEOOWWW!
AMOS AVERY CURIOS
WHAT GO YOU WANT? WHY HAVE YOU FOLLOWED ME? THEY'RE STILL AFTER ME!
NO.. NOT THEY! I'VE COME FOR YOU! YOU DIRTY..
LESTER! YOU'RE DEAD! THEY KILLED YOU! THEY WANTED YOUR HEA
HA! I WAS BETTER AT BARGAINING THAN YOU WERE! IT'S YOUR HEAD THEY WANT.. AND I'VE BEEN SENT TO GET IT!
YOU CAN'T! NOT MY HEAD! I DIDN'T MEAN TO LEAVE YOU.. OIDN'T MEAN TO
YAAAAA..
AND SO IT WAS NOT IN THE MYSTERIOUS JUNGLES OF AFRICA THAT I FOUND THIS PRIZE TROPHY.. THIS FACINATING EXAMPLE OF NATIVE CULTURE! IT WAS RIGHT HERE IN THIS SHOP!
HA HA HA

DEATH SHROUD!

Click! Click! Click!

The knitting needles flew faster. I turned and scowled at my wife Nelly's calm face where she sat slumped over in her chair, knitting. I had married Nelly while I was still in college. She had been a waitress, then. Now all she thought about was her knitting and her eternal cups of tea! It was enough to drive a man to kill!

"For Pete's sake!" I called out. "Stop knocking those needles. Stop that perpetual click-click-clicking! It's getting so I hear 'em in my sleep!"

But Nelly went on knitting, rocking slowly, annoyingly, and the clicking of the needles grew louder and louder—

I'm not sure just when the thought of killing her did occur to me. It was probably one of the times when I watched those needles moving and clicking. I soon found myself devising ways and means. Her tea! Of course! A little poison in what remained of the tea leaves in her tea-box before she bought a new box—a business trip to Boston for my alibi—and I was in the clear!

I felt secure. I had some poison left over from my college days, and I dumped it in with the remaining tea leaves. Then I packed and left for Boston. Three days after I hit Boston, a telegram came. She was dead, alone in the house. The poison had been found in the cup. It looked like suicide, all right. After all, I had been in Boston—and there was no known reason for me to kill my wife!



Oh, the police shadowed me for a few months. I did nothing to arouse their suspicions. Why should I? I had not killed Nelly because I loved another woman, or even for her money. I had killed her—because of her knitting needles.

And then, five weeks after Nelly was laid to rest . .

I sat up in bed. Cold sweat stood out on my forehead, and the palms of my hands. There in the room's darkness, there was . . . sound!

Click! Click! Click!

My heart almost stopped. It was the knitting needles! Clicking, scurrying from row to row, jarring against each other. I leaped from the bed and searched the room. I found nothing. Yet the clicking of the needles went on and on . . . hurrying . . . then slowing down.

Those needles stayed with me, day after day and night after night. I heard them in my office, in the train I took at night, in the restaurants where I ate.

What were they knitting?

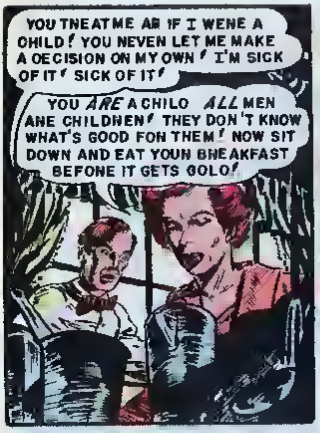
One night, I learned the answer. As I slept, I dreamed that Nelly sat knitting. At last she finished and stood up, lifting a long white woolen sheet—a shroud! "Your shroud, husband!" she whispered. She put it over my body, pulling it up until it covered my face!

I could not breathe! My lungs strained and labored, on fire! I sobbed, trying to fight that suffocating white woolen shroud—and could not!

* * *

"He smothered to death," frowned the puzzled coroner, speaking to the police inspector. "But I don't see how! He was just lying there on his back. It was as if someone pressed something on his face . . . but that's silly!"

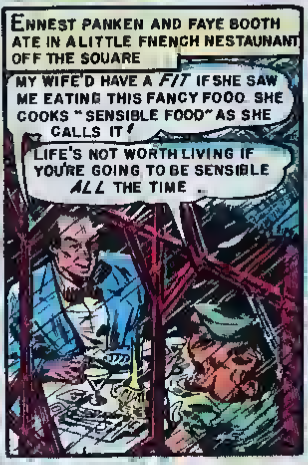

CAN A DEAD MAN KILL? CAN A CORPSE RISE FROM THE CUSHIONED QUIET OF HIS COFFIN TO STALK THE NIGHT, HANDS STRETCHING OUT TO SEEK A VICTIM? CAN DEAD EYES BLAZE WITH HATE?.. THE DEAD EYES OF...
THE KILLER IN THE COFFIN!
AN ADVENTURE IN HORROR
NAN PARKER LOVED HER HUSBAND...TOO MUCH! SHE WATCHED HIS EVERY MOVE, FEARFUL LEST HE HURT HIMSELF...
WEAR YOUR RUBBERS..THE RADIO SAID RAIN! YOU'D BETTER WALK! THEY'VE HAD SOME CASES OF DIPTHERIA, THE OTHER SIDE OF TOWN! IF YOU RIDE IN A TROLLEY, YOU MIGHT CATCH IT! THEN THIS NOON, EAT AT...
FOR PETE'S SAKE...SHUT UP!

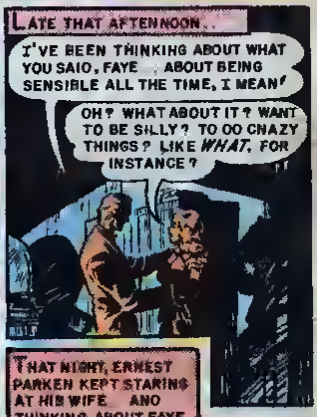

YOU TNEATME AS IF I WENE A CHILD! YOU NEVEN LET ME MAKE A OECISION ON MY OWN! I'M SICK OF IT! SICK OF IT!
YOU ARE A CHILO ALL MEN ANE CHILDNEN! THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FON THEM! NOW SIT DOWN AND EAT YOUN BNEAKFAST BEFONE IT GETS GOLO!

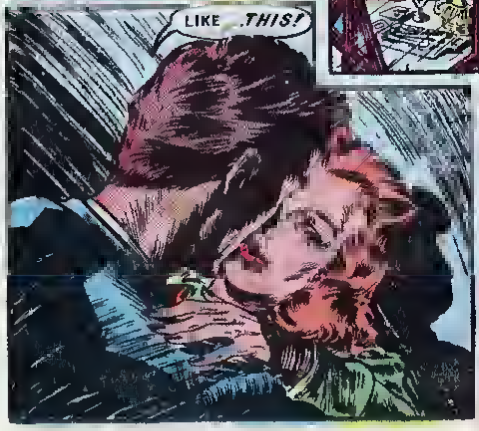

FNOM YEANS OF NABIT, ENNEST PANKEN SAT DOWN AND FINISHED NIS MEAL. BUT INSIDE HIM, THE VOLCANO OF ANGEN ANO NESENTMENT FLANEO.
OO THIS! DO THAT! EAT BECAUSE YOU NEEO YOUN STNENGTH! DON'T RIOE IN A TNOLLEY BECAUSE YOU MIGHT GET SICK! ALWAYS CRABBING.. ALWAYS HARPING!


WHEN NE NEACHEO NIS LITTLE INSURANCE OFFICE, ENNEST PANKEN WAB IN A NEBELLIOUS FNAME OF MINO. NIS PNETTY SECNETARY, FAYE BOOTH, NOTICEO IT AT ONCE...
YOU LOOK ANGNY, MN. PANKEN IT SONT OF SCARES ME! PLEASE OON'T FNOWN SMILE. THAT'S IT!
HUH, IF I SCANE YOU, YOU'NE TNE FIRST PENSON I'VE EVER SCANEO!

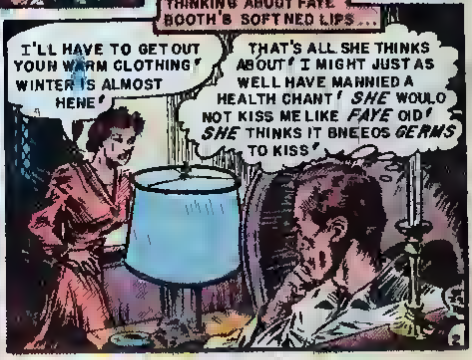

THAT'S BECAUSE YOU'NE SO NICE NICE MEN NEVE N GO'NOUNO SCANING POON LITTLE GINLS LIKE ME!
NICE,EH? YOU'NE KIND OF CUTE YOUNSELF, FAYE! FUNNY I... I NEVEN GAVE YOU MUCH THOUGNT, BEFONE! SAY, NOW ABOUT HAVING LUNCH WITH ME?

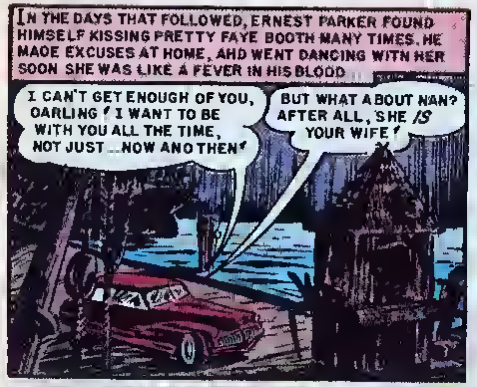

ENNEST PANKEN AND FAYE BOOTH ATE IN A LITTLE FNENCH NESTAUNANT OFF THE SQUARE
MY WIFE'D HAVE A FIT IF SHE SAW ME EATING THIS FANCY FOOO. SNE COOKS "SENSIBLE FOOO" AS SNE CALLS IT!
LIFE'S NOT WORTH LIVING IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE SENSIBLE ALL THE TIME..

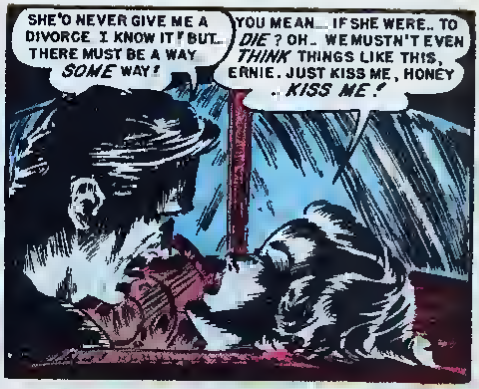

LATE THAT AFTENNOON..
I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT WHAT YOU SAIO, FAYE.. ABOUT BEING SENSIBLE ALL THE TIME, I MEAN!
OH? WHAT ABOUT IT? WANT TO BE SILLY? TO OO CNAZY THINGS? LIKE WHAT, FOR INSTANCE?

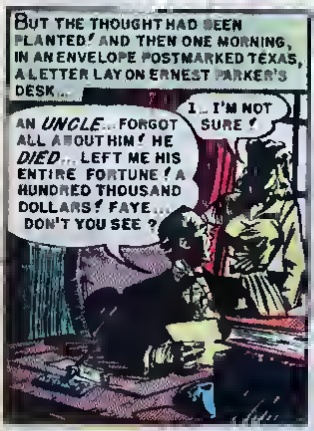

LIKE..THIS!

THAT NIGNT, ENNEST PANKEN KEPT STANING AT NIS WIFE AND THINKING ABOUT FAYE BOOTH'S SOFTNED LIPS...


I'LL HAVE TO GET OUT YOUN WARM CLOTHING! WINTER IS ALMOST HENE!
THAT'S ALL SHE THINKS ABOUT! I MIGNT JUST AS WELL HAVE MANNIED A HEALTH CHANT! SHE WOULO NOT KISS ME LIKE FAYE OID! SHE THINKS IT BNEEOS GERMS TO KISS!


IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED, ERNEST PARKER FOUND HIMSELF KISSING PRETTY FAYE BOOTH MANY TIMES. HE MADE EXCUSES AT HOME, AND WENT DANCING WITH HER SOON SHE WAS LIKE A FEVER IN HIS BLOOD
I CAN'T GET ENOUGH OF YOU, DARLING! I WANT TO BE WITH YOU ALL THE TIME, NOT JUST ...NOW AND THEN!
BUT WHAT ABOUT NAN? AFTER ALL, SHE IS YOUR WIFE!

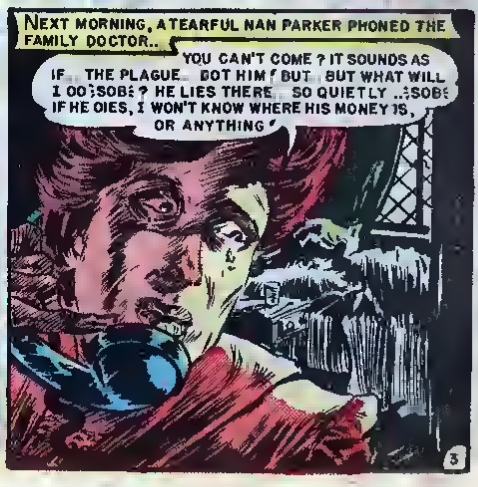

SHE'D NEVER GIVE ME A DIVORCE I KNOW IT! BUT... THERE MUST BE A WAY SOME WAY!
YOU MEAN... IF SHE WERE.. TO DIE? OH.. WE MUSTN'T EVEN THINK THINGS LIKE THIS, ERNIE. JUST KISS ME, HONEY .. KISS ME!


BUT THE THOUGHT HAD BEEN PLANTED! AND THEN ONE MORNING, IN AN ENVELOPE POSTMARKED TEXAS, A LETTER LAY ON ERNEST PARKER'S DESK...
AN UNCLE... FORGOT ALL ABOUT HIM! HE DIED... LEFT ME HIS ENTIRE FORTUNE! A HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS! FAYE... DON'T YOU SEE?
I.. I'M NOT SURE!


IT MEANS WE CAN GO AWAY TOGETHER, DARLING! WITH THAT MONEY WE CAN GO ANYWHERE WE CHOOSE!
YOU'RE FORGETTING NAN, DEAREST! WHAT ABOUT HER?


LEAVE HER TO ME! I'LL THINK OF... SOMETHING!
PLAGUE SPREADS THROUGH CITY!


BUT THAT NIGHT, OVER THE DINNER TABLE, ERNEST PARKER COMPLAINED OF A SICK HEADACHE AND DIZZY SPELLS..
SICK ARE YOU? IT'S NO MORE THAN I EXPECTED, WITH ALL YOUR HOURS! BUSINESS! SNIFF! I DON'T BELIEVE THAT! PROBABLY OUT DRINKING OR WORSE!
I.. I'M GOING TO CRAWL INTO BED 'NIGHT!


NEXT MORNING, A TEARFUL NAN PARKER PHONED THE FAMILY DOCTOR..
YOU CAN'T COME? IT SOUNDS AS IF... THE PLAGUE... DOT HIM! BUT... BUT WHAT WILL I DO SOB? HE LIES THERE... SO QUIETLY .. SOB IF HE DIES, I WON'T KNOW WHERE HIS MONEY IS, OR ANYTHING!


YES, I SAID I WANTED TO KNOW ALL ABOUT YOUR FINANCIAL MATTERS! WHERE DO YOU KEEP YOUR MONEY? IF YOU DIE, I DON'T WANT TO BE LEFT PENNILESS!
CALL... MISS BOOTH! TELL HER.. BRING HER NOTEBOOK AND MY.. PERSONAL FILE... WITH HER...
IT WAS LESS THAN AN HOUR LATER THAT FAYE BOOTH STEPPED INTO THE SICK ROOM.
I TOOK A TAXI AS...AS YOUR WIFE SAID, ERN...I MEAN, SIR!
GOOD GIRL! NOW.. SIT DOWN! GOING TO MAKE A LIST... OF THINGS FOR MY WIFE TO HAVE HER LAWYER DO...TO GET ALL.... THAT'S COMING TO HER!
FOR SEVERAL MINUTES, ERNEST PARKER DICTATED TO HIS SECRETARY, WHOSE HEART WAS THUMPING IN TERROR WITH THE FEAR OF CATCHING THE PLAGUE..YET HER BRAIN WAS BEWILDERED, FOR EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE, ERNEST PARKER WINKED AT HER!
HE'S DYING..DYING! YET HE SEEMS SO CHEERFUL! ALMOST AS IF...AS IF HE WERE PLAYING A JOKE! AND... US? HE AND I? I CAN NEVER MARRY A DEAD MAN!
AS SHE ROSE TO LEAVE, FAYE BOOTH SAW ERNEST SLIP AN ENVELOPE INTO HER NOTEBOOK.
I'LL SHOW YOU OUT, MISS BOOTH!
READ IT! DON'T FAIL ME! READ IT! DO EXACTLY AS IT SAYS! EVEN IF I DIE, DO AS I WRITE!
YES! I...I WILL!
THAT NIGHT, ERNEST PARKER WENT COLD AND STIFF. TOWARD MIDNIGHT, THE UNDERTAKER STOPPED BY...
SORRY, MRS. PARKER! CAN'T DO ANY EMBALMIN' OR ANYTHING. THE PLAGUE, YOU KNOW! MATTER OF FACT, WE GOT TO BURY 'EM IN A LONG TRENCH! THINGS ARE PLENTY BAD, ALL OVER!
WELL, DO YOUR BEST!
EVEN AS HER FOOTSTEPS DIED AWAY IN THE NIGHT, A CHANGE CAME OVER THE THING IN THE OPEN CASKET. A HAND STIRRED, LIFTED! THE LIPS TWITCHED! THE DEAD EYES OPENED TO STARE...
IT WAS A CRUDE THING! ERNEST PARKER WAS DRESSED IN HIS BEST SUIT AND STRETCHED OUT IN THE COFFIN! THAT NIGHT, HE LAY ALONE, CANDLES BURNING, THE SCENT OF ROSES IN THE AIR...
WELL, MIGHT AS WELL GET SOME SLEEP. NO SENSE SITTING HERE WITH HIM THE WAY HE IS NOW!
4

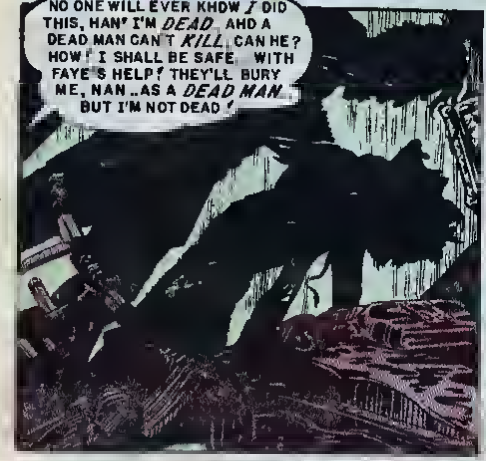

SLOWLY, THE FIGURE IN THE COFFIN STIRRED AND SAT UP, MOVING ALMOST AS ONE IN A DREAM. PALE CANDLE-LIGHT PLAYED ON WHITE FACE AND PALLID HANDS ..

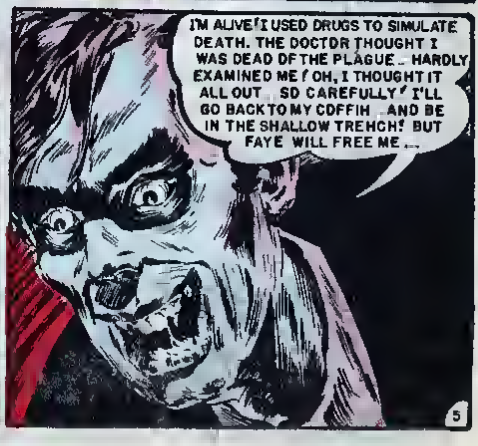

OH AIMLESS FEET, THE BODY STAGGERED FOWARD, EYES OPEN AND SIGHTLESS...

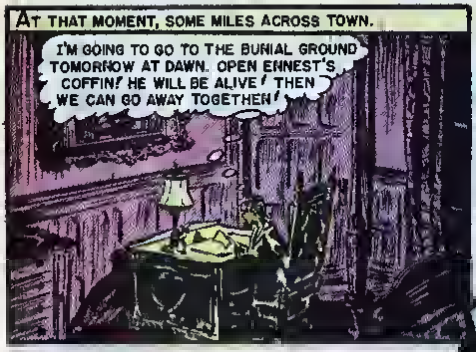

UPSTAIRS, NAN PARKER PAUSED AS SHE PREPARED FOR BED...
I THOUGHT I HEARD SOMETHING MOVING DOWN BELOW.. BUT THERE'S NO ONE HERE BUT MYSELF! HERVES, I GUESS...

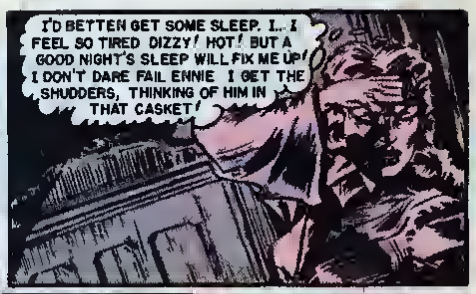

WHO... WHO'S THAT?

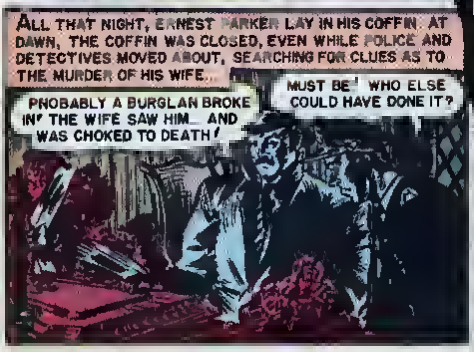

IT'S YOUR HUSBAND, NAN! YOUR HUSBAND, ERNEST! I'VE COME UP FROM MY COFFIN FOR YOU, NAN, COME TO . KILL YOU!

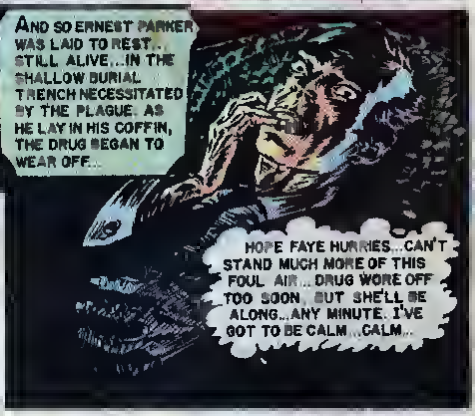

NO ONE WILL EVER KNOW I DID THIS, NAN! I'M DEAD AND A DEAD MAN CAN'T KILL, CAN HE? HOW! I SHALL BE SAFE WITH FAYE'S HELP! THEY'LL BURY ME, NAN ..AS A DEAD MAN BUT I'M NOT DEAD!

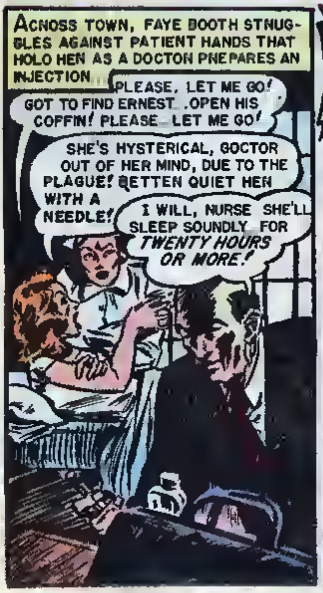

I'M ALIVE! I USED DRUGS TO SIMULATE DEATH. THE DOCTOR THOUGHT I WAS DEAD OF THE PLAGUE.. HARDLY EXAMINED ME! OH, I THOUGHT IT ALL OUT SO CAREFULLY! I'LL GO BACK TO MY COFFIN AND BE IN THE SHALLOW TRENCH! BUT FAYE WILL FREE ME...

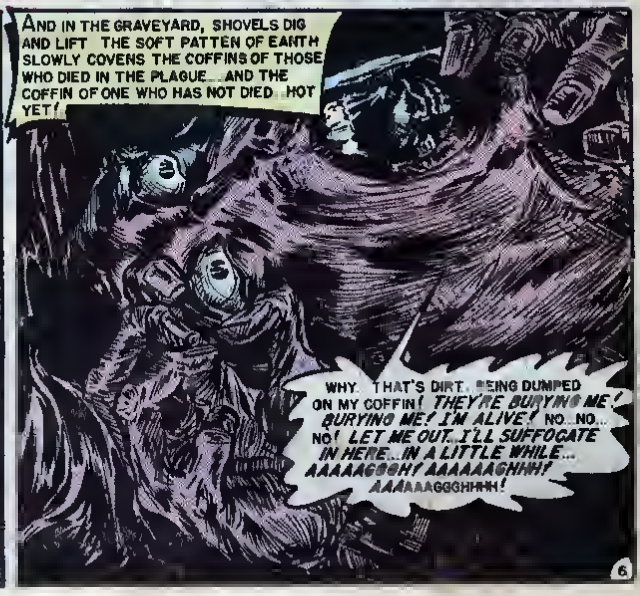

AT THAT MOMENT, SOME MILES ACROSS TOWN.
I'M GOING TO GO TO THE BURIAL GROUND TOMORROW AT DAWN. OPEN ERNEST'S COFFIN! HE WILL BE ALIVE! THEN WE CAN GO AWAY TOGETHER!


I'D BETTER GET SOME SLEEP. I... I FEEL SO TIRED DIZZY! HOT! BUT A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP WILL FIX ME UP! I DON'T DARE FAIL ENNIE I GET THE SHUDDERS, THINKING OF HIM IN THAT CASKET!


ALL THAT NIGHT, ERNEST PARKER LAY IN HIS COFFIN. AT DAWN, THE COFFIN WAS CLOSED, EVEN WHILE POLICE AND DETECTIVES MOVED ABOUT, SEARCHING FOR CLUES AS TO THE MURDER OF HIS WIFE...
PROBABLY A BURGLAR BROKE IN! THE WIFE SAW HIM... AND WAS CHOKED TO DEATH!
MUST BE! WHO ELSE COULD HAVE DONE IT?


AND SO ERNEST PARKER WAS LAID TO REST... STILL ALIVE...IN THE SHALLOW BURIAL TRENCH NECESSITATED BY THE PLAGUE. AS HE LAY IN HIS COFFIN, THE DRUG BEGAN TO WEAR OFF...
HOPE FAYE HURRIES...CAN'T STAND MUCH MORE OF THIS FOUL AIR...DRUG WORE OFF TOO SOON, BUT SHE'LL BE ALONG...ANY MINUTE. I'VE GOT TO BE CALM...CALM...


ACROSS TOWN, FAYE BOOTH STRUGGLES AGAINST PATIENT HANDS THAT HOLD HER AS A DOCTOR PREPARES AN INJECTION...
PLEASE, LET ME GO! GOT TO FIND ERNEST...OPEN HIS COFFIN! PLEASE...LET ME GO!
SHE'S HYSTERICAL, DOCTOR OUT OF HER MIND, DUE TO THE PLAGUE! BETTER QUIET HER WITH A NEEDLE!
I WILL, NURSE SHE'LL SLEEP SOUNDLY FOR TWENTY HOURS OR MORE!


AND IN THE GRAVEYARD, SHOVELS DIG AND LIFT THE SOFT PATTEN OF EARTH SLOWLY COVERS THE COFFINS OF THOSE WHO DIED IN THE PLAGUE...AND THE COFFIN OF ONE WHO HAS NOT DIED...NOT YET!
WHY...THAT'S DIRT...BEING DUMPED ON MY COFFIN! THEY'RE BURYING ME! BURYING ME! I'M ALIVE! NO...NO... NO! LET ME OUT...I'LL SUFFOCATE IN HERE...IN A LITTLE WHILE... AAAAAGGGH! AAAAAAGHHH! AAAAAAGGGHHHH!

MURDER BY A DEAD MAN!

The car hummed smoothly through the night. My hands were steady on the wheel, even though I was going to kill the man seated beside me. I had always prided myself on my steady nerves. I could even laugh and joke as if nothing were going to happen . . . just as if I liked Jim Trenton, instead of hating him with a cold, blind hatred.

"Jim, I'm surprised at you," I laughed. "What if you do love my wife? I'm no barbarian. I'm not even jealous. I hope I'm a civilized person. I realize that these things happen!

There was relief in Jim's voice as he answered: "Ed, I'll be frank. I figured you'd go off your nut when you learned Emma wanted a divorce, and was going to marry me. I was a little dreading this hunting trip of ours!"

I chuckled, nudging him with an elbow. "Just between the two of us, I've had my eye on a cute little redhead for some time. Don't tell Emma, now . "

Joking and laughing, we took the long, steep climb up to my hunting lodge. The car nosed its way up the mountain easily. Jim and I had made this trip often; now, though, Jim Trenton was making it for the last time. Oh, I was in no danger. I knew what I would do. The law would never pin this murder on me!



When I braked the car before the dark, deserted lodge, Jim got out and went around to the trunk to open it. I drew a deep breath, reached inside my coat and drew out my revolver. Carefully, I fitted the silencer to the barrel. Then I went around behind the car, as Jim stood with his head inside the trunk, dragging at a valise.

I shot him three times, pumping the trigger savagely. I caught him before he could fall and lifted the dead body to my shoulder in a fireman's hitch. I felt his limp left hand bang against my wrist, slide away, then slide back. I laughed. "They'll never get me for this, Jim. Where you're going, nobody will ever find you. And without a body to prove that you're really dead, the State can whistle for a conviction and never get it!"

It was a quick walk, even burdened down as I was. Half a mile from my cabin, there was a quicksand bog. The natives said it had no bottom. I wouldn't swear to that, but it was deep. So deep nobody could drag it for a body!

I stood on the firm ground at the very edge of the bog and lifted Jim's dead body. I held it high, then threw it . . threw it out into those dark, hungry sands . .

I lost my balance. I fell forward! Like a stunning blow, I realized that I had thtown Jim's dead body—and followed it myself! Jim was under me, clinging to me with a hand—a hand tight-wrapped around my wrist! Now the quicksand was pulling at me, trying to drag me under! *Keep your head,* I told myself. *You can squirm free! Just don't panic!*

And then—I screamed! Jim's hand, where it was closed on my wrist, had tightened in *rigor mortis!* His fingers were clamped like a steel vise on my flesh! I tried to free myself, to break those fingers, fought to open that hand, and could not!

I was anchored to a dead man! His dead weight was dragging me down faster, faster! He would not let me go! He was dragging me down with him, into the grave I had prepared for him! I was screaming as the sand crept into my mouth, clogging it . . .



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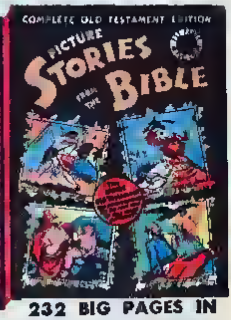
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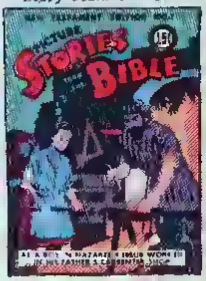
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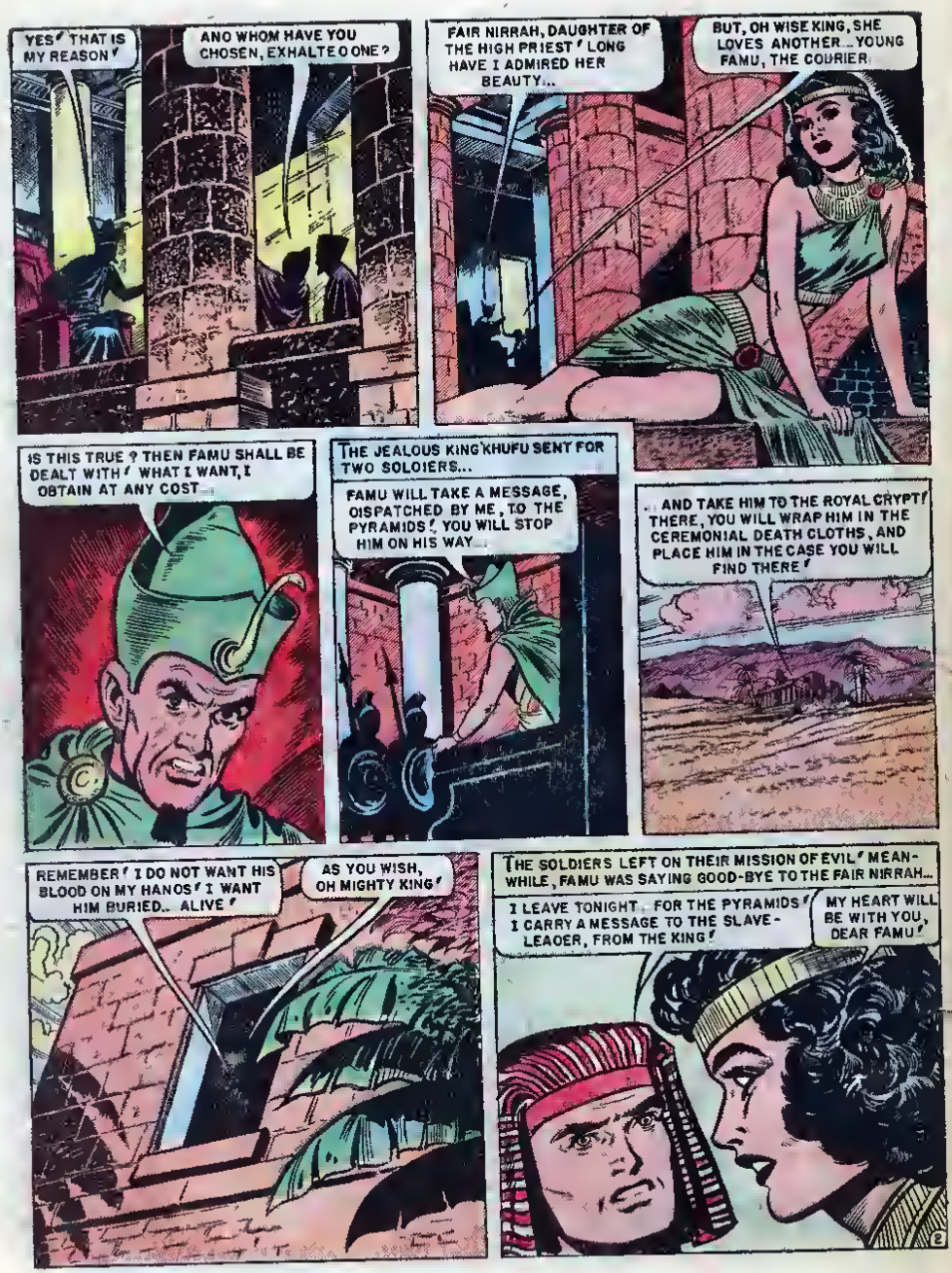
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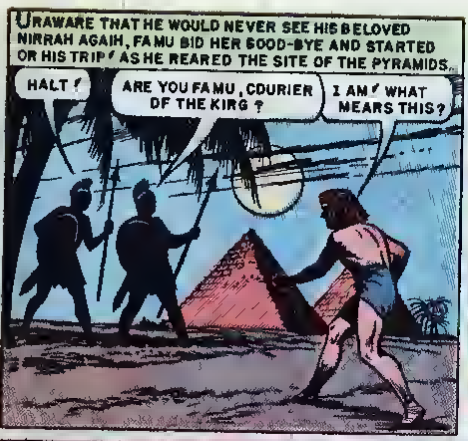
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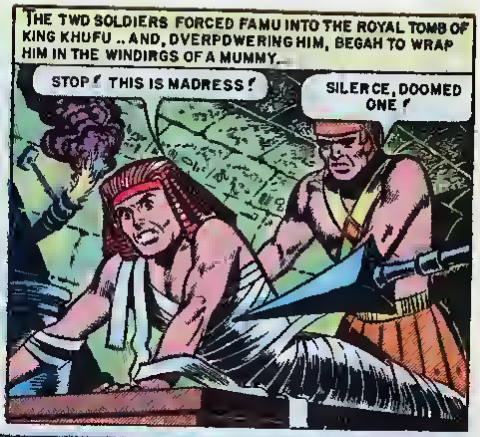
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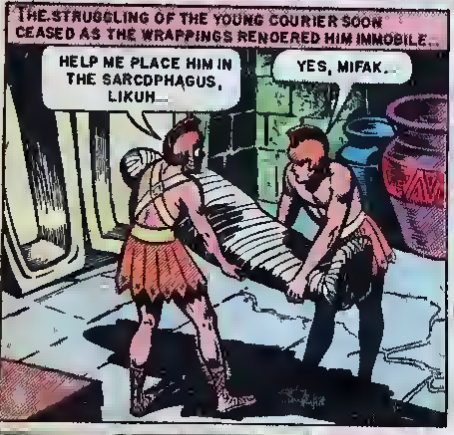
THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

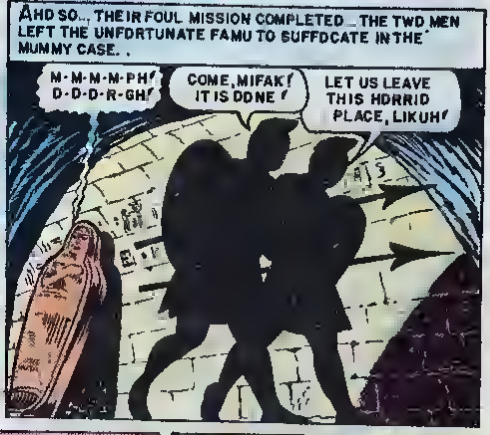



YES! THAT IS MY REASON!
AND WHOM HAVE YOU CHOSEN, EXHALTED ONE?
FAIR NIRRAH, DAUGHTER OF THE HIGH PRIEST! LONG HAVE I ADMIRED HER BEAUTY...
BUT, OH WISE KING, SHE LOVES ANOTHER... YOUNG FAMU, THE COURIER.
IS THIS TRUE? THEN FAMU SHALL BE DEALT WITH! WHAT I WANT, I OBTAIN AT ANY COST...
THE JEALOUS KING KHUFU SENT FOR TWO SOLDIERS...
FAMU WILL TAKE A MESSAGE, DISPATCHED BY ME, TO THE PYRAMIDS! YOU WILL STOP HIM ON HIS WAY...
...AND TAKE HIM TO THE ROYAL CRYPT! THERE, YOU WILL WRAP HIM IN THE CEREMONIAL DEATH CLOTHS, AND PLACE HIM IN THE CASE YOU WILL FIND THERE!
REMEMBER! I DO NOT WANT HIS BLOOD ON MY HANDS! I WANT HIM BURIED.. ALIVE!
AS YOU WISH, OH MIGHTY KING!
THE SOLDIERS LEFT ON THEIR MISSION OF EVIL! MEANWHILE, FAMU WAS SAYING GOOD-BYE TO THE FAIR NIRRAH...
I LEAVE TONIGHT... FOR THE PYRAMIDS! I CARRY A MESSAGE TO THE SLAVE-LEADER, FROM THE KING!
MY HEART WILL BE WITH YOU, DEAR FAMU!


UNAWARE THAT HE WOULD NEVER SEE HIS BELOVED NIRRAH AGAIN, FAMU BID HER GOOD-BYE AND STARTED ON HIS TRIP. AS HE NEARED THE SITE OF THE PYRAMIDS...
HALT!
ARE YOU FAMU, COURIER OF THE KING?
I AM. WHAT MEANS THIS?


THE TWO SOLDIERS FORCED FAMU INTO THE ROYAL TOMB OF KING KHUFU.. AND, OVERPOWERING HIM, BEGAN TO WRAP HIM IN THE WINDINGS OF A MUMMY...
STOP! THIS IS MADNESS!
SILENCE, DOOMED ONE!

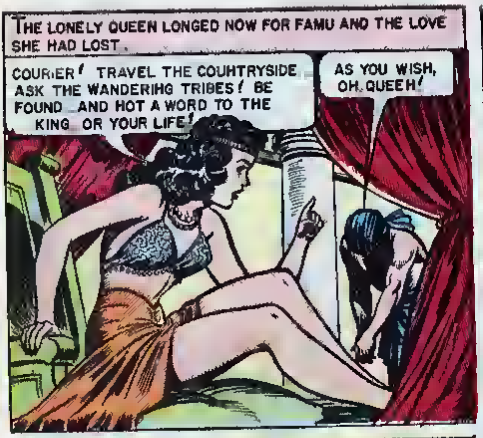

THE STRUGGLING OF THE YOUNG COURIER SOON CEASED AS THE WRAPPINGS RENDERED HIM IMMOBILE...
HELP ME PLACE HIM IN THE SARCOPHAGUS, LIKUH...
YES, MIFAK..

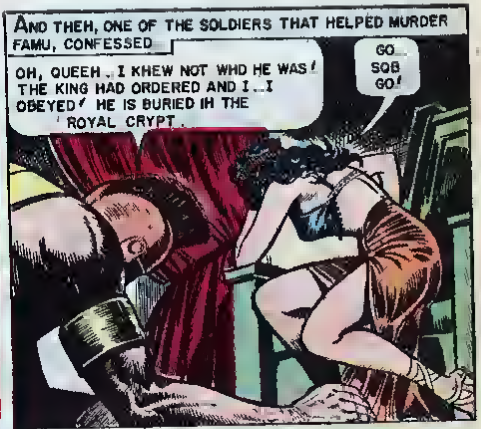

AND SO.., THEIR FOUL MISSION COMPLETED.. THE TWO MEN LEFT THE UNFORTUNATE FAMU TO SUFFOCATE IN THE MUMMY CASE..
M-M-M-M-PH! D-D-D-R-GH!
COME, MIFAK! IT IS DONE!
LET US LEAVE THIS HORRID PLACE, LIKUH!

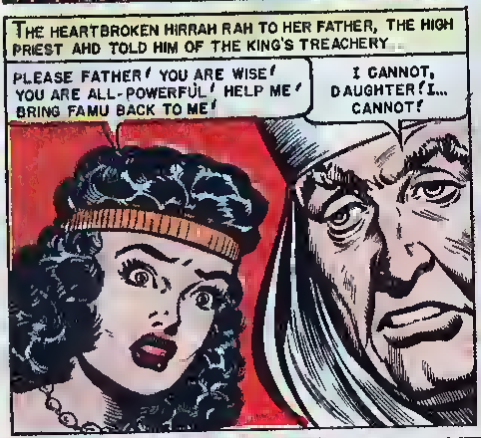

IN THE WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED, KING KHUFU CONVINCED NIRRAH THAT FAMU HAD LEFT HER...
PERHAPS HE HAS FOUND A NEW LOVE.. A GIRL OF A WANDERING TRIBE...
NO! NO! I CANNOT BELIEVE IT!

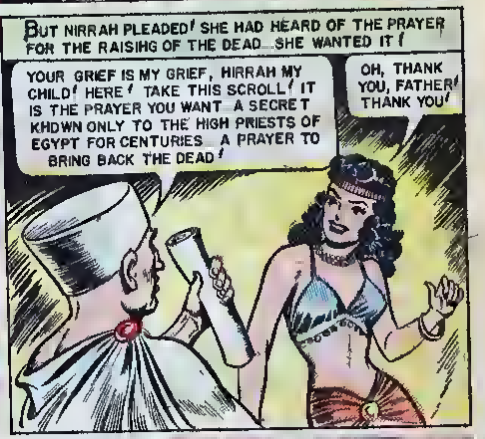

AND IN A FEW MONTHS, THE HEART-BROKEN NIRRAH WAS FORCED TO MARRY THE KING...
YOU MUST, NIRRAH, FOR MINE... YOUR FATHERS SAKE!
AS YOU WISH, HIGH PRIEST AND HONORED FATHER!


IN THE SPACE OF A YEAR, EGYPT HAD AN HEIR TO THE THRONE, AND NIRRAH'S USE TO KING KHUFU WAS AT AN END.
FOOL! YOU HAVE BORN ME A SON... NOW BEGONE FROM MY SIGHT!
SOB.. SOB..
3


THE LONELY QUEEN LONGED NOW FOR FAMU AND THE LOVE SHE HAD LOST.
COURIER! TRAVEL THE COUNTRYSIDE ASK THE WANDERING TRIBES! BE FOUND AND NOT A WORD TO THE KING OR YOUR LIFE!
AS YOU WISH, OH QUEEN!

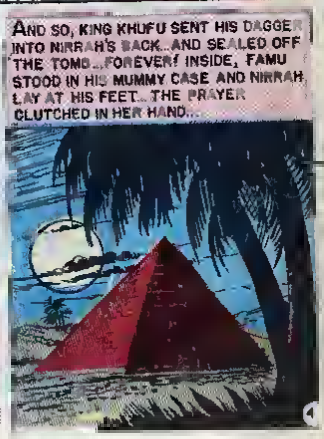

AND THEN, ONE OF THE SOLDIERS THAT HELPED MURDER FAMU, CONFESSED
OH, QUEEN.. I KNEW NOT WHO HE WAS! THE KING HAD ORDERED AND I..I OBEYED! HE IS BURIED IN THE ROYAL CRYPT.
GO... SOB GO!

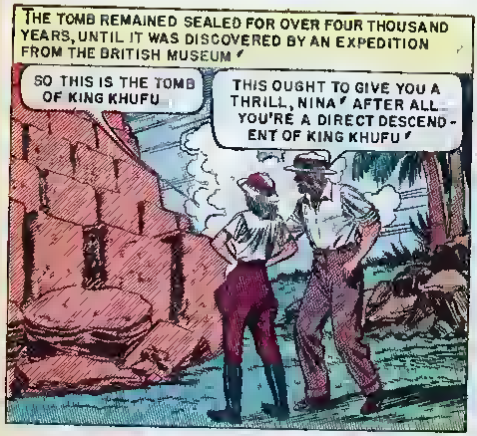

THE HEARTBROKEN HIRRAH RAH TO HER FATHER, THE HIGH PRIEST AND TOLD HIM OF THE KING'S TREACHERY...
PLEASE FATHER! YOU ARE WISE! YOU ARE ALL-POWERFUL! HELP ME! BRING FAMU BACK TO ME!
I CANNOT, DAUGHTER! I... CANNOT!


BUT NIRRAH PLEADED! SHE HAD HEARD OF THE PRAYER FOR THE RAISING OF THE DEAD..SHE WANTED IT!
YOUR GRIEF IS MY GRIEF, HIRRAH MY CHILD! HERE! TAKE THIS SCROLL! IT IS THE PRAYER YOU WANT A SECRET KNOWN ONLY TO THE HIGH PRIESTS OF EGYPT FOR CENTURIES.. A PRAYER TO BRING BACK THE DEAD!
OH, THANK YOU, FATHER! THANK YOU!


NIRRAH RUSHED TO THE TOMB.. AND.. KNEELING BEFORE THE SARCOPHAGUS, BEGAN TO RECITE THE PRAYER

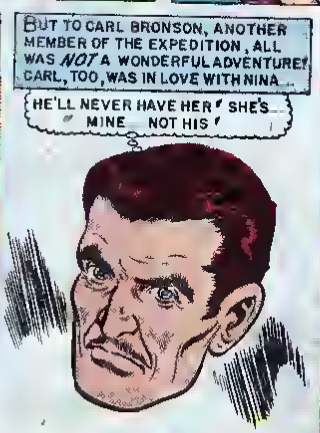

BUT BEFORE SHE COULD FINISH...
SHE KNOWS! SHE MUST DIE!


AND SO, KING KHUFU SENT HIS DAGGER INTO NIRRAH'S BACK..AND SEALED OFF THE TOMB..FOREVER! INSIDE, FAMU STOOD IN HIS MUMMY CASE AND NIRRAH LAY AT HIS FEET.. THE PRAYER CLUTCHED IN HER HAND...

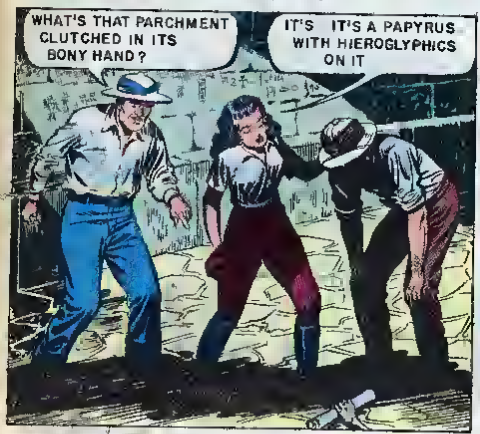

THE TOMB REMAINED SEALED FOR OVER FOUR THOUSAND YEARS, UNTIL IT WAS DISCOVERED BY AN EXPEDITION FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM'
SO THIS IS THE TOMB OF KING KHUFU
THIS OUGHT TO GIVE YOU A THRILL, NINA' AFTER ALL YOU'RE A DIRECT DESCENDENT OF KING KHUFU'


I AM THRILLED, TOM' BEING HIRED AS A TRANSLATOR FOR THE EXPEDITION WAS A STROKE OF LUCK FOR ME'
AND FOR ME, NINA' OR ELSE I WOULD HAVE NEVER MET YOU


AND ASKED YOU TO BE MY WIFE'
YES, TOM' IT'S BEEN A WONDERFUL ADVENTURE JUST WONDERFUL'


BUT TO CARL BRONSON, ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE EXPEDITION, ALL WAS NOT A WONDERFUL ADVENTURE! CARL, TOO, WAS IN LOVE WITH NINA...
HE'LL NEVER HAVE HER' SHE'S MINE NOT HIS'

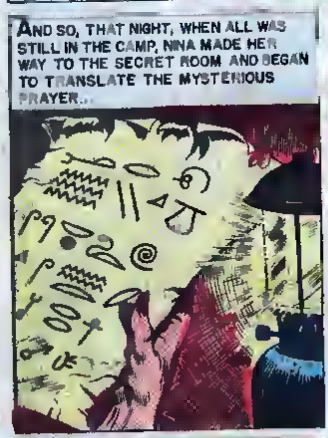

THE PARTY BEGAN TO EXPLORE THE TOMB...AND WHEN THE ROOM WHERE FAMU AND NIRRAH WERE BURIED WAS DISCOVERED...
THAT'S STRANGE' LOOK' A SKELETON'
AT THE FOOT OF THE MUMMY CASE

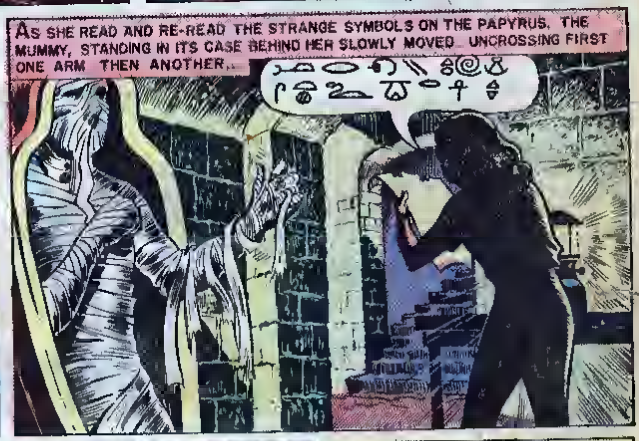

WHAT'S THAT PARCHMENT CLUTCHED IN ITS BONY HAND?
IT'S IT'S A PAPYRUS WITH HIEROGLYPHICS ON IT


WHAT DOES IT SAY NINA?
IT'S A PRAYER' FOR THE RAISING OF THE DEAD
POPPYCOCK'

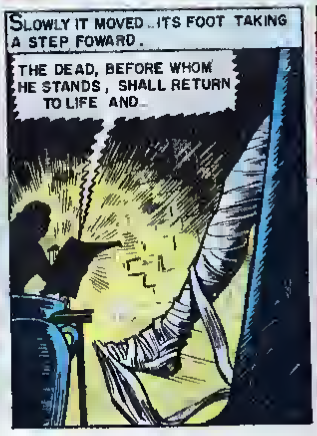

LOOK A MUMMY!
HARDLY DETERIORATED, TOO!


I'M GOING TO TRANSLATE THIS SCROLL TONIGHT, TOM!
GOOD! IT MAY HELP US FIGURE THIS OUT!


AND SO, THAT NIGHT, WHEN ALL WAS STILL IN THE CAMP, NINA MADE HER WAY TO THE SECRET ROOM AND BEGAN TO TRANSLATE THE MYSTERIOUS PRAYER...


AS SHE READ AND RE-READ THE STRANGE SYMBOLS ON THE PAPYRUS, THE MUMMY, STANDING IN ITS CASE BEHIND HER SLOWLY MOVED... UNCROSSING FIRST ONE ARM THEN ANOTHER...


AS NINA BEGAN TO UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF THE PRAYER, THE MUMMY'S ARMS EXTENDED TOWARD HER...
AND WHEN THIS SCROLL IS READ BY A HIGH-PRIEST OR ANYONE IN HIS BLOOD LINE


SLOWLY IT MOVED...ITS FOOT TAKING A STEP FOWARD.
THE DEAD, BEFORE WHOM HE STANDS, SHALL RETURN TO LIFE AND...


MEANWHILE, OUTSIDE THE TOMB...
IF I CAN'T HAVE HER...NO ONE WILL! I'LL KILL HER FIRST!


WHO'S THERE?
IT'S CARL I WANT TO SPEAK TO YOU!
NINA! YOU KNOW I LOVE YOU! TOM ISN'T FOR YOU! I SHOULD BE THE ONE YOU MARRY! TELL ME TELL ME YOU LOVE ME!
CARL LET GO OF ME
I NEVER GAVE YOU ANY INDICATION THAT I CARED FOR YOU! IT'S TOM I LOVE
ALL RIGHT... IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU FEEL
IF I CAN'T HAVE YOU, TOM WON'T EITHER! I'LL I'LL KILL YOU FIRST BEFORE I LET HIM PUT HIS FILTHY PAWS UPON YOU...
NO! OOOOOOH!
NINA FAINTED.. AND LUCKILY! FOR SHE NEVER SAW WHAT WAS BEHIND HER...
NO! NO! NO! KEEP AWAY!
THE MUMMY. ARMS EXTENDED . MOVED TOWARD CARL... CLOSER CLOSER... AND THEN..
A-A-A-A-HH!!
WHEN TOM ARRIVED UPON THE SCENE , NINA WAS COMING TO..
HE... HE'S DEAD, NINA! AND... WHAT'S THAT ALL OVER HIM? IT LOOKS LIKE DUST... AND... MUMMY WRAPPINGS!
LOOK, TOM! THE MUMMY CASE! IT'S EMPTY!
AND THAT'S THE STORY, DEAR READER! DID YOU LIKE IT? WRITE AND TELL ME WHAT YOU THINK OF MY MAGAZINE! MY ADDRESS IS: THE OLD WITCH, THE HAUNT OF FEAR, DEPT 16, 225 LAFAYETTE ST N.Y.C 12, N.Y.
7

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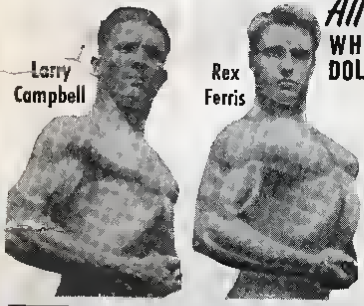
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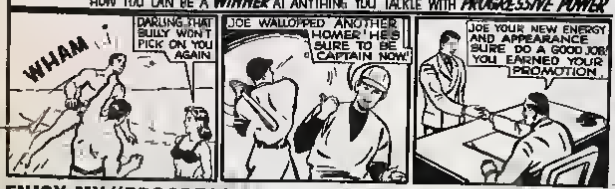
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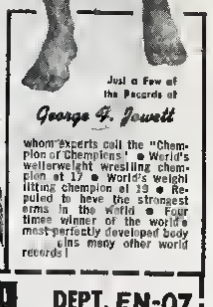
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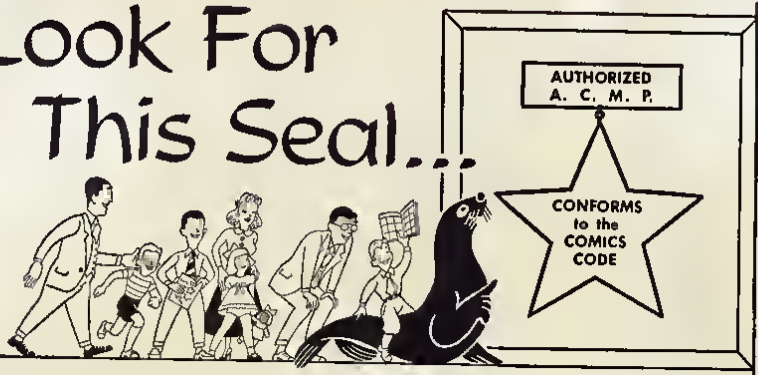
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MODERN LOVE

Haunt of Fear Sept.-Oct., 1950—Vol. 1, No. 17 Published Bi monthly by Fabies Publishing Co., Inc. at 225 Lafayette St., New York 12, N. Y. William M. Gaines, Editor Albert B. Feldstein, Associate Editor. Application as second class matter pending at the Post Office at New York, N. Y. One year subscription in the U. S. 60c plus 15c postage—total 75c—elsewhere $1.50 Entire contents copyrighted 1950 by Fabies Publishing Co., Inc. Printed in U. S. A.

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NIGHTMARE!

A PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY



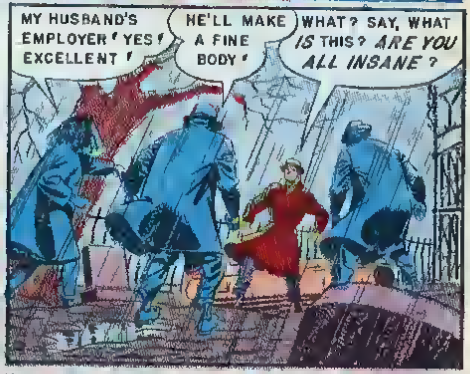
ONE OF YOUR EMPLOYEES HAS FALLEN TO HIS DEATH FROM A SCAFFOLD. NOW, AT HIS BURIAL, YOU STAND BESIDE HIS SOBBING WIFE AS SHE SEEKS TO CONTROL A RISING TIDE OF HYSTERIA. THE MONOTONOUS DRONE OF THE EULOGY HAS ONLY ADDED TO THE MISERABLE FEELING OF TENSION YOU FEEL... AND AS YOU STAND THERE, THE ONLY SOUND YOU HEAR IS THE PATTER OF THE DRIZZLING RAIN DANCING ON YOUR HAT BRIM...


UNTIL NOW THE WIDOW HAS BEEN SILENT AND MOTIONLESS BUT AS THE PALL-BEARERS STEP FORWARD ..
NO! STOP! DON'T LOWER THE CASKET! IT'S EMPTY! THE CASKET IS EMPTY!
GRAB HER! SHE'S HYSTERICAL!


YOU TRY TO QUIET THE WOMAN, BUT HAVE NO SUCCESS. FINALLY, TO APPEASE HER, THE CASKET IS OPENED ..
GOOD HEAVENS! SHE WAS RIGHT! THE CASKET IS EMPTY!
EMPTY? BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!


HOW CAN WE HAVE A FUNERAL WITHOUT A CORPSE?
A FUNERAL HAS TO HAVE A BODY!
YES! WE MUST FIND ONE!

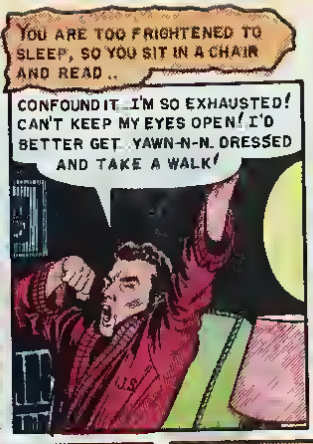

OF COURSE! WE MUST GET A BODY! BUT WHERE?
I DON'T CARE WHERE! I INSIST WE HAVE A BODY FOR MY POOR HUSBAND'S BURIAL!
WAIT WE HAVE A BODY! RIGHT HERE!


MY HUSBAND'S EMPLOYER! YES! EXCELLENT!
HE'LL MAKE A FINE BODY!
WHAT? SAY, WHAT IS THIS? ARE YOU ALL INSANE?


NO! STOP! FOR GOD'S SAKE, LET ME GO! STOP! PLEASE! YOU CAN'T BURY ME! I'M ALIVE!
HURRY! HURRY! PUSH HIM IN! PUSH HIM IN!
QUICK, NOW! CLOSE THE TOP DOWN! WE'LL HAVE TO NAIL HIM IN!


HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!
LET ME OUT!
HELP!

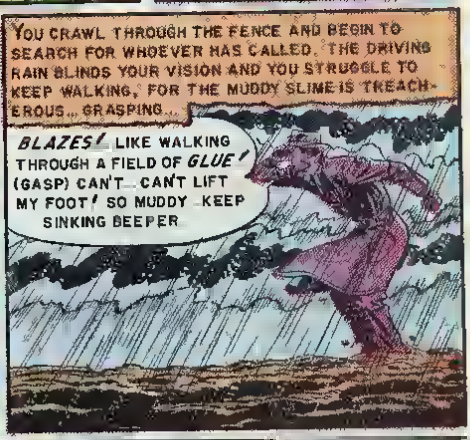


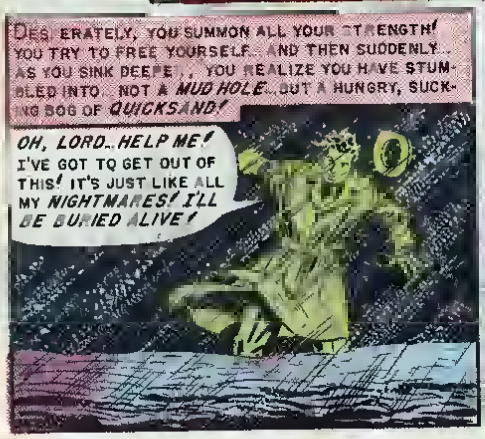


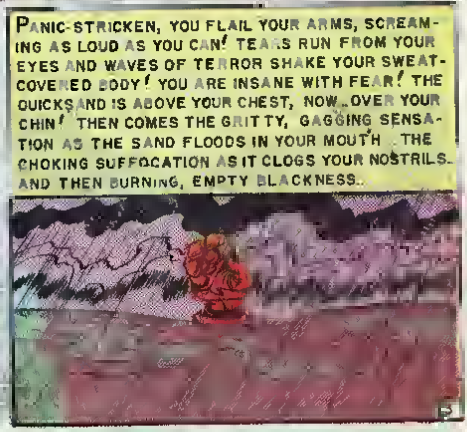


ABOVE THE HOWLING RAIN YOU THINK YOU HEAR A CRY FOR HELP! YOU AREN'T CERTAIN SO YOU WAIT, STRAINING YOUR EARS TO LISTEN AND IT COMES AGAIN!



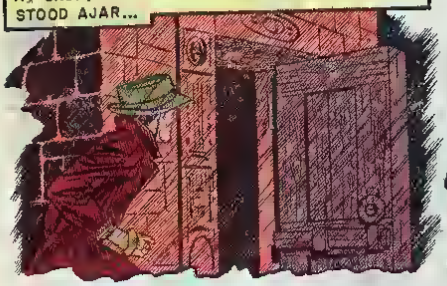







WHA..? WHY... I'M ALIVE! I'M BACK IN MY ROOM! I MUST HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP HERE IN THE CHAIR WHILE I WAS READING! IT WAS ONLY ANOTHER NIGHTMARE!
I...I CAN'T TAKE MUCH MORE OF THIS! IT'S DAYLIGHT NOW... I'LL GO VISIT A...A DOCTOR TODAY! I...I MUST HAVE HELP!
AND SO, SEVERAL HOURS LATER, YOU ARE USHERED INTO THE PRIVATE OFFICE OF A FAMOUS PSYCHIATRIST.
YOUR NAME, AGE AND OCCUPATION, PLEASE...
MY NAME IS JOHN SEVERIN! I'M 28 YEARS OLD, AND I'M A CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER!
ALL RIGHT, MR. SEVERIN! NOW WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE TROUBLE?
OR, FROYO..FOR MONTHS NOW I'VE BEEN HAVING HORRIBLE NIGHTMARES! I...I CAN'T GET RID OF THEM! THEY'RE SO REAL, THAT LATELY I'M NOT SURE WHEN I'M AWAKE OR WHEN I'M ASLEEP!
THEY ALL END THE SAME WAY! I'M ALWAYS BEING BURIED ALIVE IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER! HONESTLY, OR... FROYO, I'M GOING TO PIECES! I'M AFRAID TO SLEEP AT NIGHT!
I SEE..SUPPOSE YOU LIE DOWN ON THIS COUCH AND TELL ME ABOUT ONE OF YOUR NIGHTMARES!
JUST RELAX, MR. SEVERIN! JUST RELAX!
OH-H-H..THIS COUCH FEELS GOOD! I'VE BEEN GETTING SO LITTLE SLEEP.. (YAWN) I'M SO EXHAUSTED! WELL, DOCTOR, I REMEMBER ONE DREAM I HAD ABOUT FOUR NIGHTS AGO...
"IN THIS DREAM I WAS WALKING A DIRT ROAD THAT WOUND ENDLESSLY BESIDE A CEMETARY. I THINK IT WAS RAINING...YES, IT WAS! AND THE TOMBSTONES COVERED THE GROUND AS FAR AS THE EYE COULD SEE! SUDDENLY, I HEARD A VOICE CALLING MY NAME...
MR. SEVERIN
MR. SEVERIN
MR. SEVERIN

"I HURRIED THROUGH THE GRAVEYARD SEEKING THE SOURCE OF THE VOICE I HAD HEARD. ALL AT ONCE, I CAME UPON A MAUSOLEUM. ITS DOOR STOOD AJAR...



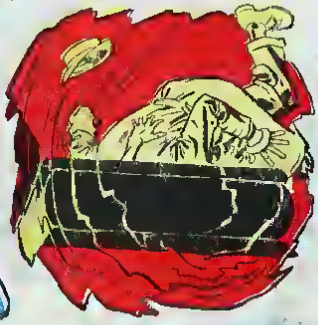
"SOMEHOW I KNEW THAT THE VOICE HAD COME FROM WITHIN. I ENTERED...I SAW A CASKET, ITS LID CLOSED... AND FROM INSIDE IT I HEARD THE VOICE CALLING MY NAME!



"I RUSHED TO THE CASKET...FLUNG OPEN THE TOP! AND THEN...



"A...A *THING* REACHED UP OUT OF THE COFFIN AND GRABBED ME! A SCREAM STRANGLED AND DIED IN MY THROAT AND BEFORE I KNEW IT...THIS *THING* HAD...HAD PULLED ME *INTO THE COFFIN!*



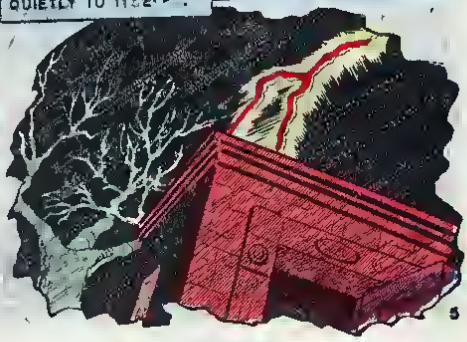
"THE LID SLAMMED SHUT! I FOUGHT FRANTICALLY TO OPEN IT, BUT...THE THING WRAPPED ITS ARMS ABOUT ME IN AN IRON GRASP AND HELD ME DOWN! *I BEGAN SCREAMING!*



"THE THING ONLY HELD ME TIGHTER! AS I FOUGHT AND STRUGGLED TO FREE MYSELF, I SENSED THAT THIS INHUMAN CREATURE WAS LAUGHING AT ME! FOR IT SEEMED THAT ITS MOUTH WAS TWISTED IN A WICKED GRIN! AFTER A WHILE I CEASED FIGHTING! MY BODY WENT LIMP, AND MY FACE RESTED ON THE FACE OF THE THING. I SOBBED QUIETLY IN DESPAIR...



"SOON EVERY BREATH RACKED MY LUNGS WITH SEARING PAIN! I GASPED AND PANTED FOR AIR... *AIR!* BUT THE THING ONLY GRINNED INTO MY FACE AND HELD ME *TIGHTER!* AS I LAY THERE DYING, I COULD HEAR THE CRASHING OF THUNDER... AND MINGLED WITH IT I HEARD THE THING CHUCKLING QUIETLY TO ITSELF..."




AND THAT'S HOW IT ENDED, DR FROYD! JUST LIKE ALL MY NIGHTMARES! I WAS BURIED ALIVE!
I SEE! WELL, MR SEVERIN, I THINK I CAN READILY EXPLAIN THE CAUSE OF YOUR NIGHTMARES! IT'S QUITE SIMPLE!
YOU'RE OVERWORKED, MR SEVERIN! AND YOUR DREAMS ARE NOTHING BUT SUBCONCIOUS MANIFESTATIONS OF THIS FACT! IN OTHER WORDS, YOU FEEL YOU ARE SIMPLY "BURIED UNDER TOO MUCH WORK!"
DO YOU REALLY THINK SO, DOCTOR?
OF COURSE! IT'S NOTHING AT ALL TO WORRY ABOUT! GO AWAY...TAKE A VACATION!
I HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT, DOCTOR! I'LL ASK MY BOSS THIS AFTERNOON FOR A VACATION! I CERTAINLY COULD USE ONE!
GOOD! GOOD! A LITTLE REST, AND YOU'LL BE AS GOOD AS NEW! TAKE MY WORD FOR IT I KNOW WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT!
OKAY, DR FROYD! YOU KNOW, I FEEL BETTER ALREADY!
AH, IT'S A BEAUTIFUL DAY! I'M GLAD I DECIDED TO VISIT DR FROYD! I SHOULD HAVE GONE TO HIM A LONG TIME AGO!
I'LL SEE MR HARRISON...ASK HIM TO LET ME HAVE MY SUMMER VACATION NOW! DO ME A WORLD OF GOOD! RIGHT NOW, THOUGH, I BETTER GET TO WORK...SEE HOW THAT BUILDING CONSTRUCTION IS COMING ALONG...
YOUR FIRM IS BUILDING A NUMBER OF OFFICE BUILDINGS, AND AS CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, IT IS YOUR JOB TO SUPERVISE THE WORK...
HI, SEVERIN! WHERE YOU BEEN ALL MORNING?
HELLO, PAUL! I...AH ...I OVERSLEPT! SAY, WHY ISN'T ANYONE WORKING?
6

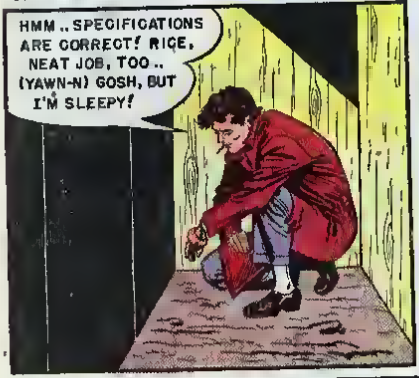


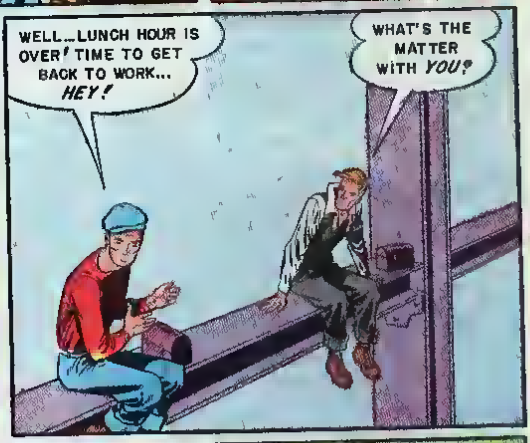


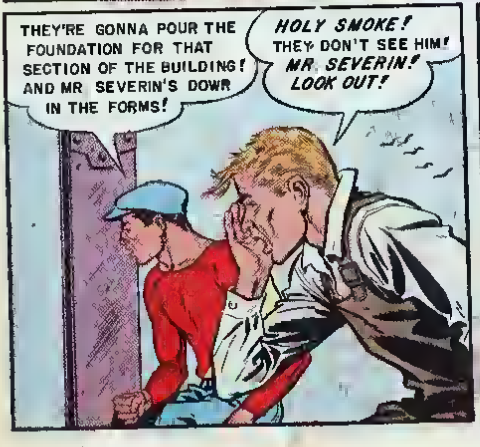
THE MEN HAVE BEEN READYING THE WOODER FRAMES INTO WHICH THE CEMENT IS POURED TO FORM THE BUILDING'S FOUNDATION. WHEN THE CEMENT DRIES, THESE FORMS WILL BE REMOVED!

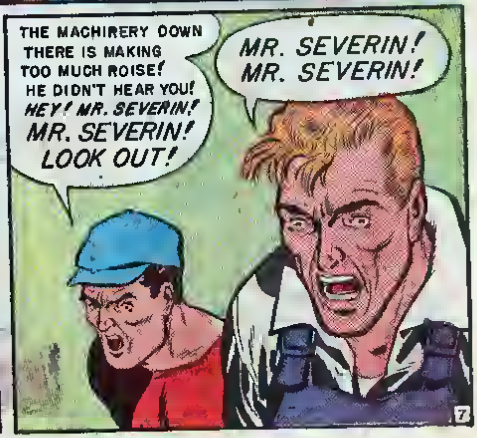


YOU NOSE ABOUT INSIDE THE FORMS, CHECKING ON MEASUREMENTS, MAKING SURE ALL IS OKAY..









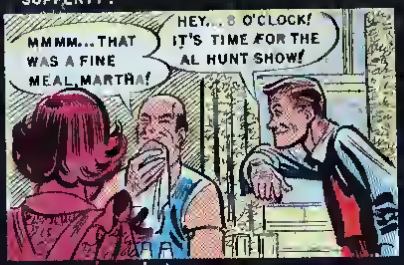

THAT'S STRANGE! I COULD SWEAR I HEARD SOMEONE CALLING ME! AND WHAT'S ALL THAT NOISE?
GREAT SCOTT! THEY'RE GOING TO POUR THE FOUNDATION! THEY DON'T KNOW I'M HERE! I'VE GOT TO GET OUT!..??? WAIT A MINUTE...
WHAT AM I WORRIED ABOUT? THIS IS JUST LIKE ANOTHER NIGHTMARE! I HEAR MY NAME CALLED AND THEN I'M BURIED ALIVE.. HA!
I WON'T BE FOOLED THIS TIME! HA! HA! HA! I'M PROBABLY SLEEPING ON THE COUCH IN DR FROYD'S OFFICE! HA! HA! WAIT'LL I WAKE UP...WILL I TELL HIM A STORY! C'MON! BRING ON THE CEMENT! THIS IS JUST ANOTHER DREAM!
HA HA! HA! HA! HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT! HE KNEW WHAT WAS HAPPENING! HE COULD HAVE GOTTEN OUT IN TIME! BUT HE JUST STOOD THERE, LAUGHING! LIKE IT WAS A BIG JOKE! CAN'T THEY GET HIM OUT?
SURE! BUT IT WON'T DO ANY GOOD! HE'S DEAD BY NOW! CHEE, I'M SURE GLAD IT WASN'T ME THAT WAS BURIED ALIVE!
-THE END-

AH...THE THIN LINE THAT SEPARATES THE PHYSICAL FROM THE SPIRITUAL... THE LIVING FROM THE DEAD! THIS IS A STORY ABOUT THE LIVING *AND* THE DEAD! WHO WOULD SUSPECT THIS GRUESOME STORY COULD START ON A COMMONPLACE TELEVISION SET... ON MILLIONS OF TELEVISION SETS... IN MILLIONS OF HOMES ALL OVER THE COUNTRY! BUT ENOUGH! LET US BEGIN AT THE BEGINNING...THE BEGINNING OF THE TALE OF...

TELEVISION TERROR!

A JOURNEY INTO THE SUPERNATURAL

WE FIND OURSELVES IN AN AVERAGE AMERICAN HOME! THE BABBIT FAMILY HAS JUST FINISHED SUPPER...






I WOULDN'T MISS HIS PROGRAM FOR ANY-THING!
DIDN'T HE ANNOUNCE LAST WEEK THAT HE WAS GOING TO SPEND THIS NIGHT IN A HAUNT-ED HOUSE?
HERE IT COMES!
THERE HE IS.. RIGHT ON TIME!
SH! LET'S LISTEN!
..AND SO, ONCE AGAIN IT'S "HUNT-ING WITH HUNT" TIME! TIME FOR YOU TO COME ALONG WITH ME, AL HUNT..AND WITH THE AID OF YOUR TELEVISION SET, YOU WILL BE WITH ME WHEREVER I GO, AND SEE WHAT-EVER I SEE! NOW.. YOU'D BETTER TURN THE LIGHTS DOWN LOW AND HOLD ON TO YOUR SEATS!
..YOU SEE..TONIGHT I'M GOING TO VISIT A REAL HAUNTED HOUSE! NO KIDDING! HA-HA-HA! AND TO PROVE IT, I'VE BROUGHT ALONG PRO-FESSOR JOHN POLTERGEIST OF THE LONDON SOCIETY OF PSYCHIC RESEACH! HA-HA! PROF, MEET THE TELEVISION AUDIENCE! HA-HA-HA!
THANK YOU!
WOG
WE'VE GOT THE T.V. TRUCK OUT HERE ON LOCA-TION...AND THE HOUSE IS UP THERE ON THE HILL! SEE IT, FOLKS? HA-HA! BUT SUPPOSE I LET THE PROF TELL YOU ABOUT IT! HEY, PROF?
WELL...
WOG
MR HUNT! THE STORY GOES THAT IN 1897, A MR CREEOMORE MOVED INTO THIS HOUSE WITH HIS YOUNG BRIDE BECAUSE OF THE DIFFERENCE IN THEIR AGES, THE CREEOMORES DIDN'T GET ON WELL TOGETHER! THEN ONE BLACK NIGHT MR CREEOMORE'S BODY WAS DISCOVERED HANGING BY THE NECK IN AN UPSTAIRS ROOM!
WOG
BUT THAT WASN'T THE END OF THE STORY! IT WAS RUMORED THAT MR CREEOMORE HADN'T HUNG HIMSELF AT ALL, BUT WAS FOULLY MURDERED BY HIS WIFE AND HER LOVER! IN ANY EVENT, SOON AFTER, SHE AND A NEWLY ACQUIRED HUSBAND SETTLED DOWN TO LIVE IN THE CREEOMORE MANSION! THEY'D HARDLY BEEN MARRIED ONE MONTH WHEN THEY TOO WERE FOUND HANGING DEAD FROM THE VERY BEAM THAT MR CREEOMORE HAD DANGLED FROM!
2

SINCE THEN, SIXTY YEARS AGO, NO ONE HAS LIVED IN THE CREEDMORE MANSION! IT IS A WELL KNOWN *FACT* AMONGST THE NEIGHBORS THAT CREEDMORE MANSION IS *HAUNTED!*

WELL... HA HA! OH WITH THE SHOW! LET'S BE OFF TO SEE THE SPOOKS, GHOSTS AND BANSHEES! HA-HA-HA!

NOW...LET ME EXPLAIN, FOLKS! THIS TRIP WILL BE NO FAKE... *NO, SIR!* I SAID I WAS GOING INTO A REAL HAUNTED HOUSE, AND BY GOLLY... *I AM!* I HAVE HERE A SPECIAL PORTABLE TELEVISION CAMERA WITH A POWERFUL SPOT LIGHT! SEE... I'M GOING TO LEAVE THE TELEVISION CREW, THE POWER TRUCK... *EVERY-THING*... BEHIND! THEN AS I WALK UP AND INTO THE HOUSE, I'LL REEL OUT A CABLE SO'S I CAN HAVE MY CAMERA CONNECTED TO THE POWER TRUCK AT ALL TIMES! THEN THERE'LL BE JUST THE PROFESSOR, MYSELF, AND *YOU*, THE TELEVISION AUDIENCE INSIDE THE HAUNTED HOUSE!

THE PROFESSOR WILL ROOT OUT THE SPOOKS AND I'LL TAKE THEIR PICTURE, HEY, PROF? HA-HA!

I WARN YOU, MR HUNT! THE WORLD OF PSYCHIC PHENOMENA IS NOT TO BE TAKEN LIGHTLY!

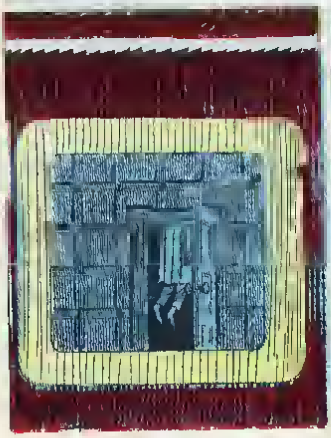
WELL... THERE THEY GO, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! AL HUNT WITH HIS SPECIAL CAMERA REELING OUT THE CABLE, AND PROF. POLTERGEIST WITH HIS LITTLE SUITCASE OF GHOST HUNTING EQUIPMENT!

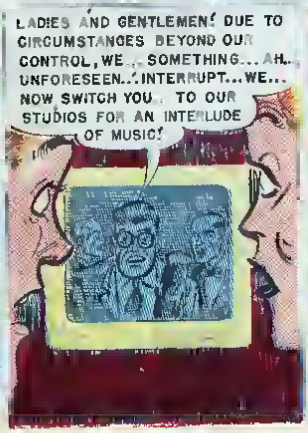

... NOW FOLKS, WE'RE READY TO GO INSIDE THE HAUNTED HOUSE! HA-HA-HA! AT THIS POINT, THE ENGINEERS WILL SWITCH YOU OVER TO THE CAMERA THAT I'M CARRYING..
HERE WE GO, FOLKS! YOU FIRST, PROFESSOR! HA! HA!
NOW I WARN YOU, MR. HUNT! IF THERE ARE EVIL SPIRITS HERE, YOU MAY BE ENGULFED BY A TERRIBLE DEPRESSION! IN ANY EVENT, KEEP YOUR WITS ABOUT YOU!
... NOW THAT WE'RE INSIDE I'LL JUST SET THE CAMERA DOWN HERE ON THE FLOOR SO THAT WE CAN WALK AROUND IN FRONT OF IT! ...THERE!
CLUNK!
BRRR! ISN'T THIS THE SPOOKIEST HOUSE YOU'VE EVER SEEN, FOLKS! HA-HA! WELL PROF, FIND ANY SPOOKS YET? HEH! GEE IT'S AWFULLY COLD IN HERE!
YOU MAY LAUGH, MR. HUNT, BUT I SENSE THE PRESENCE OF SOMETHING VERY STRONGLY!
HA! CUT IT OUT, PROF! YOU'LL SCARE OUR AUDIENCE TO DEATH!
NEVERTHELESS, I DO SENSE A PRESENCE VERY DEFINITELY.. AND SENSATIONS SEEM TO COME FROM UPSTAIRS!
I'M GOING UPSTAIRS TO INVESTIGATE, MR HUNT! YOU MAY FOLLOW ME IF YOU SO DESIRE!
UPSTAIRS? SURE.. WE'LL GO UPSTAIRS IN A WHILE! BUT FIRST LET ME SHOW THE TELEVISION AUDIENCE AROUND THIS ROOM! HA-HA!

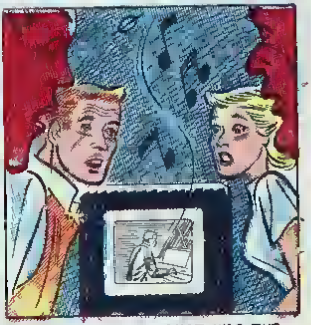

WELL, FOLKS...THE PROFESSOR IS PUTTERING AROUND UPSTAIRS! HA-HA! I CAN HEAR HIS FOOTSTEPS MOVING ABOVE ME! T-THIS PLACE IS... HAH...*REALLY CREEPY!* WEE-ELL! LET'S SEE NOW! I'LL SWING THIS CAMERA AROUND!
CLUMP CLUMP CLUMP
SAY! LOOK HERE! A PAINTING! MUST BE OLD MAN CREEDMORE! SURE LOOKS...LOOKS...DOWN-RIGHT MEAN! HEH! GEE...THE CHILL GETS YOU RIGHT TO THE B-BONE!
...AND THIS MUST'VE BEEN THE MISSUS! SOME DISH, HUH FOLKS? STRANGE! IT'S SO ICY COLD IN THIS CORNER OF THE R-ROOM!
HA-HA! FUNNY! THIS PLACE MUST BE REALLY GETTING ME! NOW I'M BEGINNING TO HEAR THINGS! ALL GOES TO SHOW YOU HOW YOU IMAGINE THINGS WHEN YOU'RE...WELL... SCARED!
...MUST BE THE WIND! SOUNDS. SOUNDS LIKE SWISHING OF CLOTH OVER THE FLOOR... ALL AROUND
PROFESSOR IS STILL MOVING ABOUT UPSTAIRS! GUESS I'LL GO UP AND JOIN HIM! PHEW... WON'T WE ALL BE GLAD WHEN *THIS* PROGRAM'S OVER! NOW...LET ME LIFT THIS CAMERA...


WHAT'S THAT?
CRASH!
DROPPED THE CAMERA! SOMETHING... SOMETHING ICY COLD WENT BY ME... TOUCHED MY CHEEK... ICY COLD... I... I...
..MUSTN'T LOSE MY WITS! THE PROFESSOR! I CAN'T HEAR HIM! MUST GO UPSTAIRS AND... AND FIND HIM! LET ME TAKE THE CAMERA...
PROFESSOR!
UP THESE STEPS! I HEAR HIM! HE'S MOVING BEHIND THAT DOOR! PROFESSOR!
PROFESSOR! WHY DON'T YOU ANSWER ME? I KNOW YOU'RE IN THERE! I'LL JUST OPEN THE DOOR AND.. UH!
SLAM!


THE PROFESSOR! THOSE PEOPLE! MY BRAIN IS WHIRLING... I-I...
HEE...HEE! I KNOW WHO YOU ARE! HEE-HEE-HEE! YOU'RE MR. GREEDMORE AND MRS. GREEDMORE ..! AND YOUR LOVER HEE-HEE! YOU WANT ME TO CLIMB UP THERE? SURE! HEE-HEE-HEE! I DON'T CARE!
HEE-HEE! PUT THIS AROUND MY NECK? HEE-HEE-HEE! WHY NOT! HEE-HEE! YA-HA! HA... UK!




LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! DUE TO CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND OUR CONTROL, WE... SOMETHING... AH.. UNFORESEEN..! INTERRUPT... WE... NOW SWITCH YOU.. TO OUR STUDIOS FOR AN INTERLUDE OF MUSIC!


STRANGE? WELL. THAT WAS THE PROGRAM JUST AS IT WAS ORIGINALLY TELEVISED! CAN *YOU* EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED? *WE CAN'T!*

REPEAT PERFORMANCE

Carstairs awoke with a start; his forehead was damp with ice-cold perspiration and the twisted bedclothes attested to the fact that his slumber had been torturous. He passed a shaky hand over his throbbing eyes and tried hard to swallow the lump of fear that was caught in his throat like bitter gall. It was by all odds the most terrible dream he had ever experienced . . its crystalline clearness and urgency made it a horrible nightmare. A shudder trembled visibly down his slender body.

Carstairs kicked the blankets away and his feet slid to the carpet. He rose almost convulsively and stumbled across to the bathroom. By main effort he was able to turn on the faucet and slosh cold water over his face and neck. He staggered back to his bedroom and slumped into the easy-chair next to the window. His dream had been as clear as anything he ever remembered happening to him. Even now he felt a tremor of fear when he thought of the short rap on the door and his padding over to it to throw it open. In his dream he had seen a tall man standing there in the hallway . . a man he had never seen before, with a vicious white scar running from temple to throat . . a man who was so lifelike that Carstairs' mind's-eye still had a perfect picture of him.

"They're close behind me!" the man had said breathlessly, forcing his way into the room and brushing Carstairs aside as he did so.

Carstairs had gasped as the man suddenly whirled and faced him. He had watched in silent terror as a weird glint came to the stranger's eye and the man slowly removed his enormous hands from his pockets, approaching closer and closer. And then in an instant Carstairs felt those grotesque hands digging into his neck . . . felt a sob stifled in his throat . . felt the blackness close in on him as his consciousness was choked out of him!

Carstairs had awakened in a cold-sweat. Even now he could almost feel the strangling sensation in his throat . . even now, with all the lights on! Carstairs felt himself slowly relaxing and he inhaled deeply on the cigarette he had lit a moment before with shaking fingers. With each puff, blessed normalcy seemed to flow over him.

"Must have been that infernal midnight snack," he mused to himself, as he settled deeper into the easy chair. "Or those screaming headlines and blaring radio bulletins about the insane killer escaping this afternoon from the Asylum over in Trenton!"

There was a short rap on the door and Carstairs looked up in terror. But his tenseness faded as he crossed the room . . having company when he was so jittery might be just what he needed.

Carstairs' hand turned on the knob and the door swung open. In the hallway stood a tall man Carstairs couldn't seem to place. The overhead light traced a scar running jaggedly from the stranger's temple down to his throat.

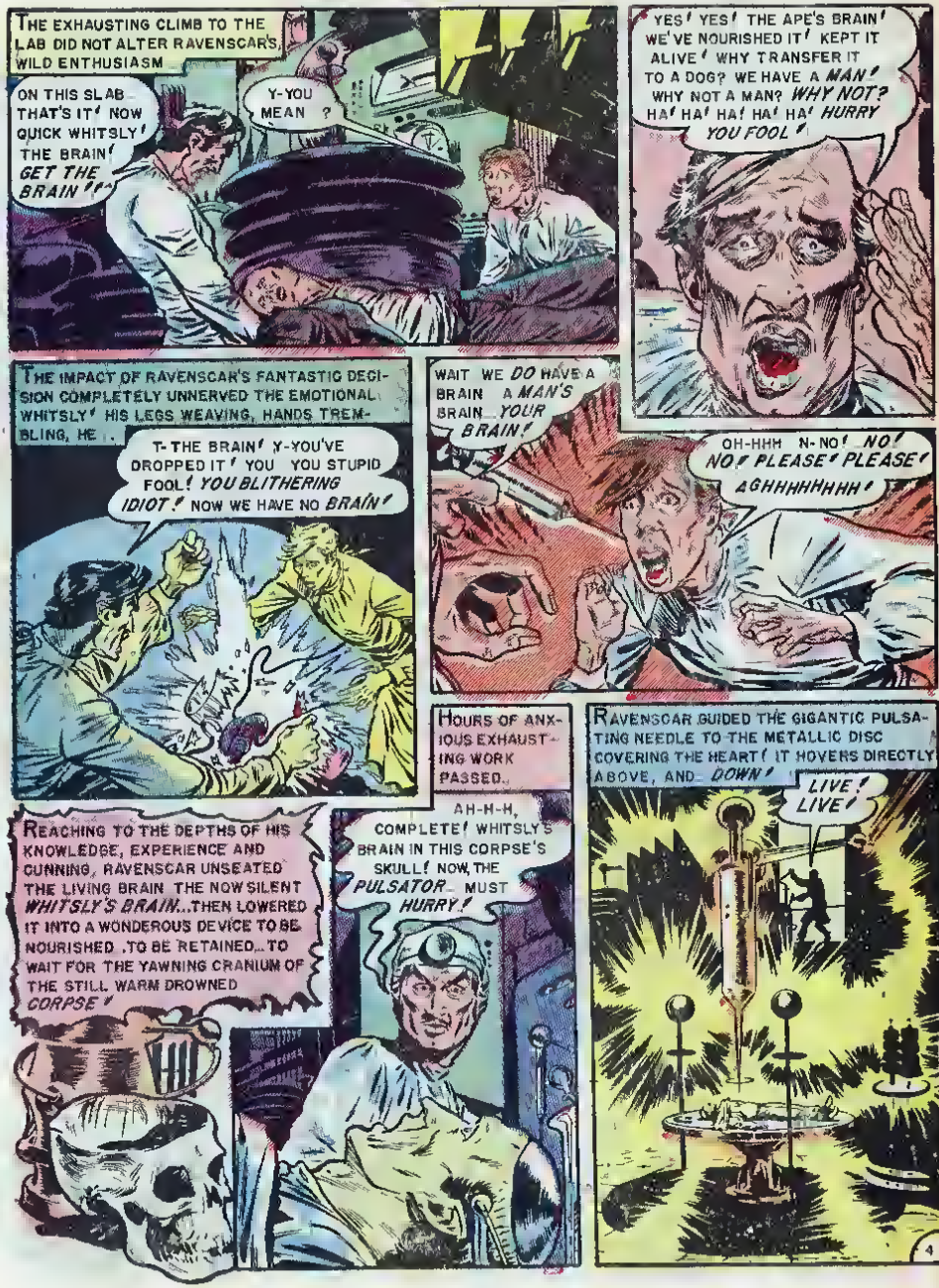
Carstairs felt the faintness creeping up on him again. "They're close behind me," the stranger was saying breathlessly . .

SOMEWHERE...SOMEWHERE ON THIS EARTH, THERE'S A HIDEOUS...THING...! PEERING INTO DIMMED WINDOWS, STALKING LONELY STREETS, LURKING IN THE SHADOWS... THE FANTASTIC CREATION OF FRUSTRATED GENIUS, THE FRIGHTFUL ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE...

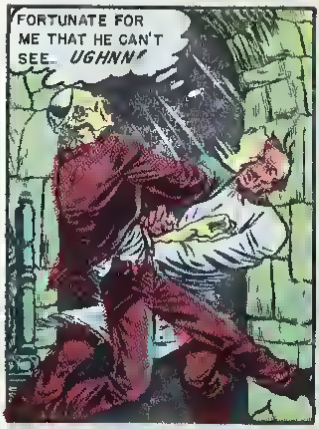



THOUGHTFULLY, THE DEJECTED DOCTOR RAVENSCAR PASSED THROUGH THE FOG AND GLOOM...
LONG REST! BAH! THEY DON'T FOOL ME ONE BIT! OVERLOOK MY FABULOUS SUCCESS, BUT SEIZE UPON TRIVIAL FAILURES!
FRUSTRATION HIS SOUL-MATE, THE CELEBRATED BRAIN SURGEON ENTERED HIS LUXURIOUS HOME - HIS LABORATORY ASSISTANT, WHITSLY, LISTENED INTENTLY TO THE DISAPPOINTING TURN OF EVENTS.
THEY'VE TURNED YOU OUT? B-BUT WHY? BECAUSE THE OPERATIONS FAILED? PROVED FATAL?
BECAUSE OF THREE FAILURES IN SUCCESSION - THREE DEATHS IN A ROW! IT COULD HAPPEN TO ANYONE! BUT NO! NO! THEY CALLED THEM SIMPLE OPERATIONS!
WAIT. JUST WAIT? QUICK WHITSLY! WE'RE LEAVING AT ONCE! PACK OUR EQUIPMENT... OUR INSTRUMENTS!
AND GET THE CAR!
Y-YES, DOCTOR!
THE MAD JOURNEY FINISHED, THE EXHAUSTED WHITSLY BROUGHT THE CAR TO A FINAL HALT! THERE, ON THE CLIFF'S EDGE, STOOD THE CASTLE OF RAVENSCAR, OVERLOOKING THE NORTH SEA AND DESOLATE MOOR...
A BURNING MEMORY OF RAVENSCAR'S WRATH ENABLED WHITSLY'S CLAMMY HANDS TO GUIDE THE BIG CAR SKILLFULLY, HASTILY NORTHWARD... TOWARD THE SEA!
FASTER, YOU IDIOT! DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? I HAVE NO TIME TO WASTE!
AHH! THERE IT IS! THERE IT IS, JUST AS IT WAS BUILT HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO BY MY ANCESTORS!
2


HIS COMMANDS HAVING TURNED WHITSLY TO MANY TASKS, THE DOCTOR SPENT THE ENTIRE NIGHT REVIEWING HIS LONG YEARS OF SECRET RESEARCH..
AH, YES! YES, I'M READY! THE WORLD SHALL EMBRACE ME!
NEXT MORNING, THOUGH THE SUN HAD SCARCELY DISSOLVED THE CHILL OF THAT REGION, RAVENSCAR HAD ALREADY BEGUN THE PROCUREMENT OF LARGE QUANTITIES OF METAL, GLASS, CHEMICALS, LABORATORY EQUIPMENT.
THEY DON'T HAVE IT? TELL THEM TO GET IT! SPARE NO COST!
MONTHS PASSED.. BUT ENLISTING THE MANY CRAFTSMEN OF THE COUNTRYSIDE, RAVENSCAR SUCCESSFULLY DIRECTED THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE CASTLE'S GIGANTIC KITCHEN INTO A FANTASTIC LABORATORY!
BUT WHAT'S IT FOR?
NEVER MIND! YOU'VE BEEN PAID! GET OUT!
THAT EVENING, A VIOLENT STORM CHURNED THE SEA, AND SEETHED ABOUT THE TOWERS OF THE OLD CASTLE BUT RAVENSCAR WAS PREOCCUPIED BY HIS MOST INSPIRING EXPERIMENT
THE BRAIN ALIVE FED..
DOCTOR! DOCTOR! A SHIPWRECK! A MAN WASHING UP ONTO THE SHORE! HE'LL BE DROWNED..
HE...HE'S DEAD!
QUICKLY! HURRY! UP TO THE LAB WITH HIM! I HAVE AN IDEA...INDEED..WHAT AN IDEA!
DROWNED?
DOWN..DOWN THEY RACED DOWN THROUGH THE MUSTY PASSAGES TO THE BATTERED OLD SMUGGLER'S COVE HUNDREDS OF FEET BENEATH THE CASTLE.
T-THERE! ON THE ROCK!
3


THE EXHAUSTING CLIMB TO THE LAB DID NOT ALTER RAVENSCAR'S WILD ENTHUSIASM
ON THIS SLAB— THAT'S IT! NOW QUICK WHITSLY! THE BRAIN! GET THE BRAIN!!"
Y-YOU MEAN ?
YES! YES! THE APE'S BRAIN! WE'VE NOURISHED IT! KEPT IT ALIVE! WHY TRANSFER IT TO A DOG? WE HAVE A MAN! WHY NOT A MAN? WHY NOT? HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HURRY YOU FOOL!
THE IMPACT OF RAVENSCAR'S FANTASTIC DECISION COMPLETELY UNNERVED THE EMOTIONAL WHITSLY! HIS LEGS WEAVING, HANDS TREMBLING, HE . .
T-THE BRAIN! Y-YOU'VE DROPPED IT! YOU YOU STUPID FOOL! YOU BLITHERING IDIOT! NOW WE HAVE NO BRAIN!
WAIT WE DO HAVE A BRAIN A MAN'S BRAIN... YOUR BRAIN!
OH-HHH N-NO! NO! NO! PLEASE! PLEASE! AGHHHHHHHH!
HOURS OF ANXIOUS EXHAUSTING WORK PASSED..
AH-H-H, COMPLETE! WHITSLY'S BRAIN IN THIS CORPSE'S SKULL! NOW, THE PULSATOR— MUST HURRY!
REACHING TO THE DEPTHS OF HIS KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCE AND CUNNING, RAVENSCAR UNSEATED THE LIVING BRAIN THE NOW SILENT WHITSLY'S BRAIN...THEN LOWERED IT INTO A WONDEROUS DEVICE TO BE NOURISHED .TO BE RETAINED...TO WAIT FOR THE YAWNING CRANIUM OF THE STILL WARM DROWNED CORPSE!
RAVENSCAR GUIDED THE GIGANTIC PULSATING NEEDLE TO THE METALLIC DISC COVERING THE HEART! IT HOVERS DIRECTLY ABOVE, AND— DOWN!
LIVE! LIVE!
4


THE THE HAND IT MOVED! ALIVE! IT'S ALIVE!
AGHHHHHH!
THE WORLD WILL WORSHIP ME H-HE CAN'T SEE! T-THE LIGHT IT'S BLINDING HIM! NEEDS A... A MASK!
AGHHHHHH!
AGHHHHHH!
RAVENSCAR HASTLY REMOVED THE HUGE NEEDLE AND DARKENED THE ROOM! THEN, FASHIONING A LARGE BLACK HOOD...
IT'S STOPPED SCREAMING!
CAN YOU SPEAK? DO YOU HEAR ME?
AGHHHHHHH!
THE RETURNING LIGHT AND INQUISITIVE APPROACH OF RAVENSCAR AROUSED THE LIVING CORPSE! IT SCREAMED AND THRASHED...
N-NO DON'T! I WON'T HARM YOU! WAIT! WAIT! STAY THERE!
AGHHHHHH!
HE'S BLIND! CAN'T SEE! HE'LL GO OFF THE CLIFF... MUST CATCH HIM!
BLINDLY, THE STRANGE CREATURE CRASHED THROUGH THE THICK SHRUBBERY AND RACED OUT ONTO THE MOOR...
AGHHHHHHH!
HE'S WEAVING! I'LL CUT HIM OFF DIRECTLY!
BRINGING FORTH AN INHUMAN BURST OF EXERTION, THE DOCTOR HURLED HIMSELF UPON THE FLAILING CORPSE...
W-WHAT STRENGTH! BY JOVE! WHAT STRENGTH!
AGHHHHHHHH!
5

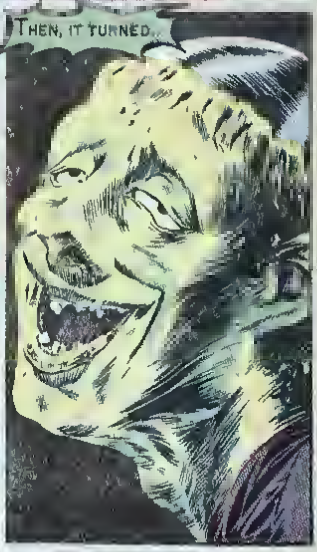

FORTUNATE FOR ME THAT HE CAN'T SEE... UGHNN!


WEIRD SCREAMS FROM THE TOWER REVIVED RAVENSCAR'S SENSES
N-NO...NO! DON'T GO UP THERE!


AGHHHHHHHHH!
THERE HE IS! CAN'T SEE ME! HE MUSTN'T GET TO THE WINDOW!


RAVENSCAR LUNGED WILDLY TOWARDS THE CORPSE TO PREVENT ITS FALLING THROUGH THE TOWER WINDOW...BUT, AT THE CRUCIAL MOMENT, THE CORPSE DEFTLY SIDE STEPPED...
AI AEEEEEE!


DOWN...DOWN...DOWN THE HUNDREDS OF FEET TO THE JAGGED ROCKS BELOW PLUNGED RAVENSCAR...WHILE THE "THING" STARED BLANKLY AFTER HIM...


THEN, IT TURNED...


DID IT... THIS THING... LURE THE FRUSTRATED GENIUS RAVENSCAR TO HIS DEATH? WHITSLY IS DEAD! THE DOCTOR IS DEAD! BUT WHERE IS THE THING? WHERE?? WHERE IS IT RIGHT NOW?



THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE

Well, well . . . looks like it's time for me to stop stirring the evil brew in my cauldron, and serve up a few tasty morsels concocted by you—the readers of this, my very own BLOOD-CHILLING magazine! Your eager acceptance of the HAUNT OF FEAR warms my shriveled heart, and I shall earnestly strive to continue bringing the very best in FEARFUL FICTION! Oh, incidentally, if this is the first time you've read my magazine, it is probably because my regular HORROR-HAPPY readers GOBBLED up the previous issues as fast as they were put on the stands! So ask your newsdealer to order a few more next time if you can't get your own HAIR-RAISING copy! And now for the MAD-MAIL!

Dear Old Witch,

I only wish I had found THE HAUNT OF FEAR sooner! Words cannot express my gratitude to you for publishing such a marvelous magazine! It is the best in horror, suspense, and terror! You asked me which story I liked the best! EVERY LAST ONE WAS THE BEST!

Miss Barbara Williams
Chicago 13, Ill.

Thank you, Barbara, for your slightly complimentary letter! Of course, you under-rate my magazine . . . it's much better than the WEAK words you have used to describe it! Oh . . . and please don't use the words HORROR and TERROR . . . these sissy words belong to those two tellers of FAIRY TALES, THE CRYPT-KEEPER and THE VAULT-KEEPER!

* * * * *

Dear Old Witch,

I derive much enjoyment and pleasure from reading your book! Being a Navy NEURO-PSYCHIATRIC TECHNICIAN, I would like to point out that your stories not only test the intelligence, but leave room for ascertaining the PROGNOSTIC ASPECTS as well as DIAGNOSTIC VALUES. It is my contention that material of this kind aids the layman greatly in the field of mental disease and psychological disorders, and would prevent further misconstruances and misconceptions of mental difficulties!

Wallace E. Gatesp
N.P.T. U.S.N.

Wha—!? ME? Doing all that? Anchors aweigh! Always did like the NAVY! ME . . . helping all those handsome sailors! Well, scrape off my BARNACLES and call me BILGE-WATER BESSIE, the BAG of the BATTLEWAGONS!

* * * * *

My dearest Old Hag,

You MUST settle this question once and for all! That purveyor of nursery-fiction, the Keeper of the CRYPT OF TERROR, claims that you are his GHOUL-FRIEND! As you and I both know, this is preposterous! Once at the offices of our mutual publisher, you called me "NAUSEATING OLD BUZZARD"... and it was then that I realized you loved ME! So publicly proclaim ME to be the CRAB-APPLE of your BLOODSHOT EYES, dearest! (The CRYPT-KEEPER said that your stories are milder than baby-soap, and that they put old women to sleep at night!)

THE VAULT-KEEPER
VAULT OF HORROR, U.S.A.

Dearest Old Crone,

The Keeper of the VAULT OF HORROR, that foppish teller of milk-toast tales, has announced that you are his BITTER-HEART! WE know that is POPPYCOCK, don't we! Once you said to me, "GAD, YOU REVOLT ME!" I knew at once that it was LOVE AT FIRST FRIGHT! So tell the world . . . spew it forth from your crooked toothless mouth . . . that it is I who be the CREEPY MONSTER of your NIGHTMARES! (The VAULT-KEEPER said that your magazine wouldn't make a bowl of gelatin quivver during an earthquake . . . that it makes duller reading than a telephone directory!)

THE CRYPT-KEEPER
CRYPT OF TERROR, U.S.A.

Are you two decayed old derelicts KIDDING? Why I wouldn't be caught ALIVE with either of you! With all the vampires and werewolves living in the HAUNT OF FEAR, how can you CREEPS expect to RATE? See . . . one little COMPLIMENT and you OLD COOTS become CASANOVAS . . . great lovers! Why don't you go bury each other . . . alive?

So, dear reader, when you feel ready enough to hold a pen, why don't you write me? Tell me what kind of stories you like the best! Address your letters to: The Old Witch, Rm. 706, Dept. 17, 225 Lafayette St., N. Y. C. 12, N. Y.



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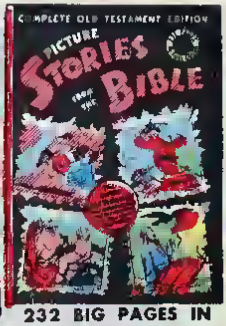
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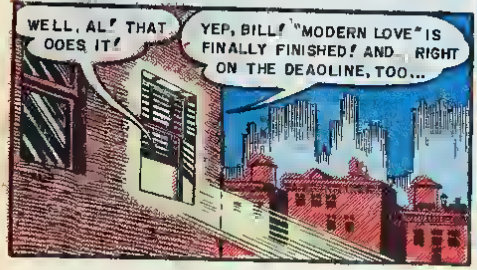
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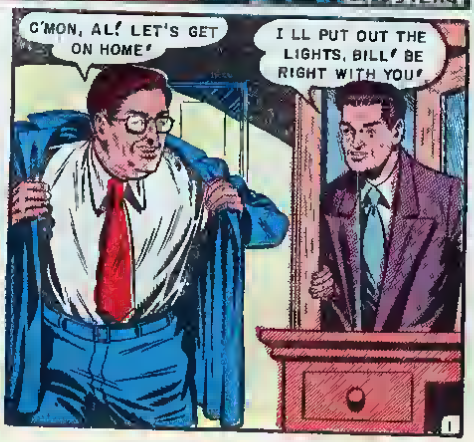
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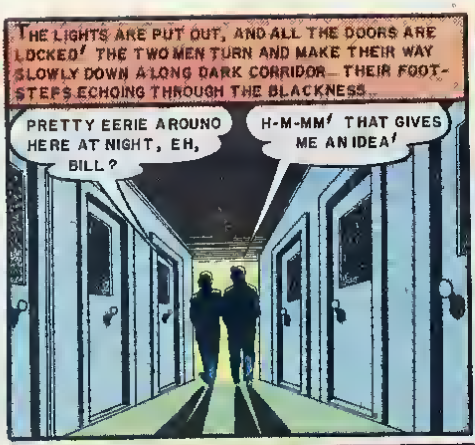
THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

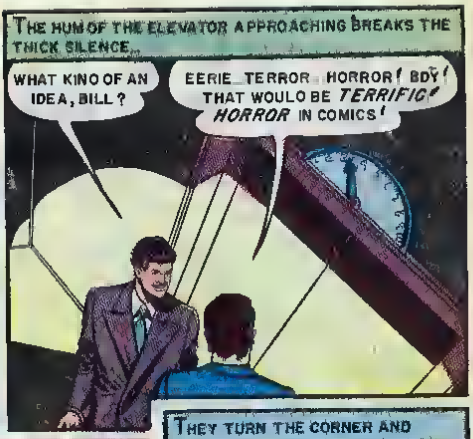


MY STORY BEGINS ON A DANK, DISMAL NIGHT! THE CITY IS ASLEEP! THE BUILDINGS STAND, COLD AND BARE LIKE TOMBSTONES IN A CROWDED CEMETARY! ALL IS SILENT. ALL IS DARKNESS... EXCEPT FOR A SINGLE LIGHTED WINDOW, HIGH UP IN ONE BUILDING. THE OFFICES OF THE E.C. COMIC MAGAZINE PUBLISHING COMPANY! INSIDE...TWO MEN BREATHE A SIGH OF RELIEF...

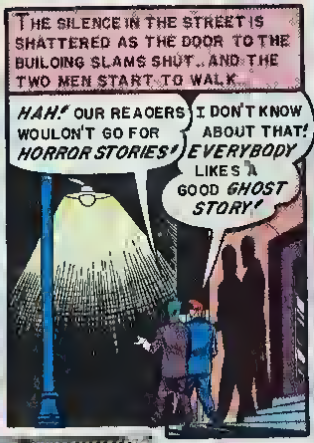


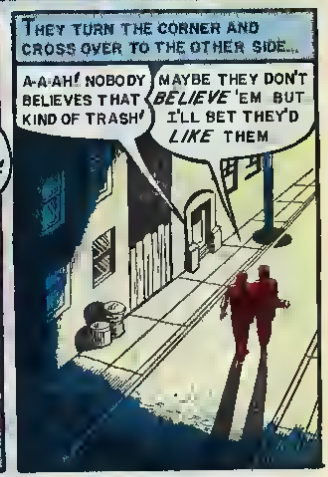



THE LIGHTS ARE PUT OUT, AND ALL THE DOORS ARE LOCKED! THE TWO MEN TURN AND MAKE THEIR WAY SLOWLY DOWN ALONG DARK CORRIDOR— THEIR FOOTSTEPS ECHOING THROUGH THE BLACKNESS...
PRETTY EERIE AROUND HERE AT NIGHT, EH, BILL?
H-M-MM! THAT GIVES ME AN IDEA!

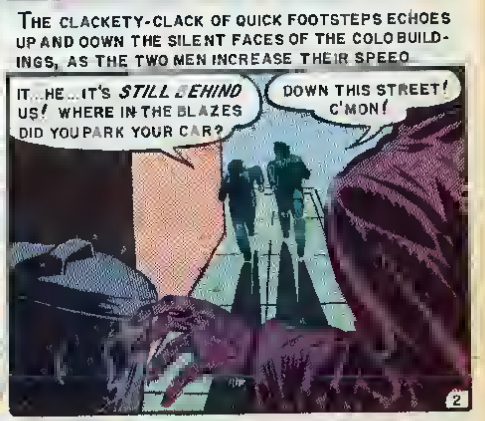

THE HUM OF THE ELEVATOR APPROACHING BREAKS THE THICK SILENCE...
WHAT KINO OF AN IDEA, BILL?
EERIE...TERROR...HORROR! BOY! THAT WOULO BE TERRIFIC! HORROR IN COMICS!


THE ELEVATOR BEGINS TO DESCEND... CARRYING THE TWO MEN DOWN TOWARO THE DARK STREETS BELOW...
YOU MEAN CREEPY STORIES LIKE GHOSTS AND STUFF?
SURE! I BET THAT'D GO OVER BIG!


THE SILENCE IN THE STREET IS SHATTERED AS THE DOOR TO THE BUILOING SLAMS SHUT.. AND THE TWO MEN START TO WALK...
HAH! OUR READERS WOULON'T GO FOR HORROR STORIES!
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT! EVERYBODY LIKES A GOOD GHOST STORY!

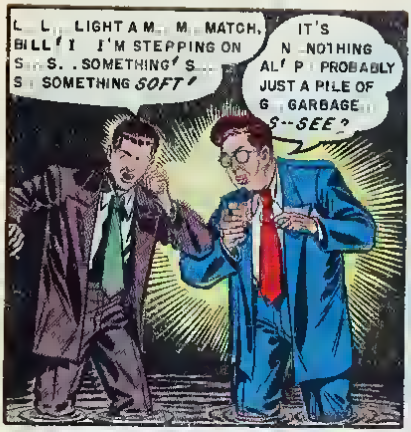

THEY TURN THE CORNER AND CROSS OVER TO THE OTHER SIDE...
A-A-AH! NOBODY BELIEVES THAT KIND OF TRASH!
MAYBE THEY DON'T BELIEVE 'EM BUT I'LL BET THEY'D LIKE THEM

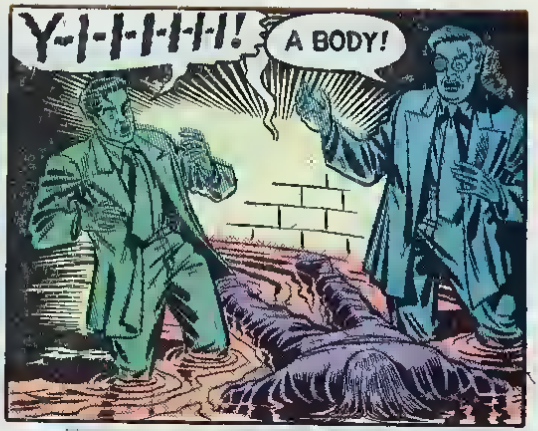

HEY, BILL! DON'T TURN AROUND... BUT I THINK WE'RE BEING FOLLOWED!
HUH?


THE CLACKETY-CLACK OF QUICK FOOTSTEPS ECHOES UP AND OOWN THE SILENT FACES OF THE COLO BUILDINGS, AS THE TWO MEN INCREASE THEIR SPEEO...
IT...HE...IT'S STILL BEHIND US! WHERE IN THE BLAZES DID YOU PARK YOUR CAR?
DOWN THIS STREET! C'MON!

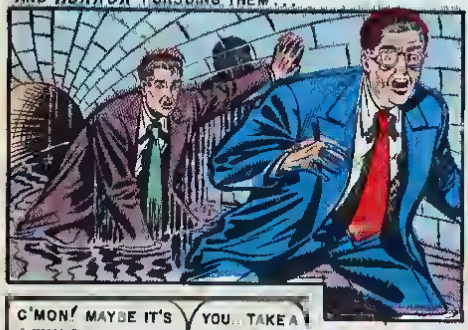

BILL! HE'S STILL FOLLOWING US! HURRY! HURRY!
C'MON! I THINK IT'S AROUND THIS CORNER
GOOD LORD!
TRAPPED! IT'S A DEAD END!
MAYBE...MAYBE IT'S ONLY A COINCIDENCE, BILL! MAYBE HE ISN'T REALLY FOLLOWING US!
WE'LL SEE! IF HE TURNS THAT CORNER
GULP!
IT ISN'T ANY COINCIDENCE! C'MON!
WHERE YUH GOING? YOU CAN'T CLIMB BRICK WALLS?
LOOK! AN OPEN MANHOLE!
THE TWO TERRORIZED MEN SCAMPER OOWN THE YAWNING BLACK HOLE AS THE CLACK-CLACK OF THE FOOTSTEPS BEHIND THEM GROW LOUDER...LOUDER
HURRY...HURRY!
I'M NO ATHLETE! TAKE IT EASY! I'M RUSHIN' ALL I CAN!
SWIFTLY THEY PULL THE LADDER OOWN WITH THEM THEREBY FOILING ANY ATTEMPT AT BEING FOLLOWED! THEN
BILL! HE'S CLOSING THE LID!
LISTEN! LISTEN TO HIS HORRIBLE LAUGH!


A-A-H-HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
WE'RE TRAPPED, BILL! TRAPPED!
MAYBE... MAYBE HE'LL GO AWAY!
SUDDENLY, THE HYSTERICAL RANTING OF THE PERSON ABOVE THEM STOPS... AND QUICK FOOTSTEPS SCURRY AWAY IN THE STREET...
HE... HE'S GONE!
PUT UP THE LADDER! LET'S TAKE A LOOK!
IT... UGH... IT'S STUCK! I... OOOF... I CAN'T BUDGE THIS LID!
WHAT'LL WE DO, AL? WHAT'LL WE DO?
MAYBE WE CAN FIND ANOTHER EXIT... GET OUT THAT WAY?
LET'S GIVE IT A TRY!
SLOWLY... CAUTIOUSLY... THE TWO MEN MOVE FORWARD IN THE GLOOM OF THE MUSTY SEWER...
I'M SCARED, BILL!
I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T BELIEVE IN CREEPY HORROR STUFF!
I... I... DON'T! ONLY... WELL ...THIS PLACE IS DIFFERENT! I'VE NEVER BEEN IN A SEWER BEFORE!
OH... AND HAUNTED HOUSES... OLD CASTLES... GRAVEYARDS... TOMBS... YOU'VE BEEN IN THOSE?
OH, SHUT UP! I... I... A-A-A-G-H-H!
WHAT'S THE MATTER, AL?
4

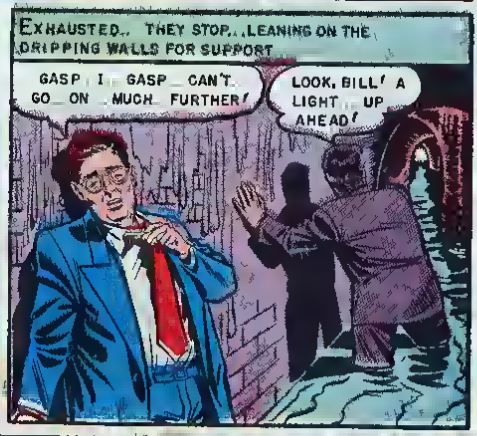




BLINDLY THE TWO MEN RUSH FROM THE HARROWING SIGHT OF THE DECAYED CORPSE SLUSHING THROUGH THE STENCH FALLING CRAWLING! FEAR *FEAR* IN THEIR HEARTS... *FEAR* IN THEIR MINDS *FEAR* AND *HORROR* PURSUING THEM...



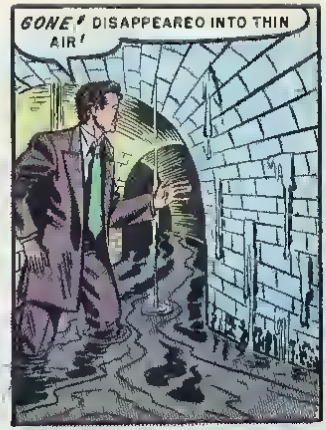
EXHAUSTED... THEY STOP... LEANING ON THE DRIPPING WALLS FOR SUPPORT...





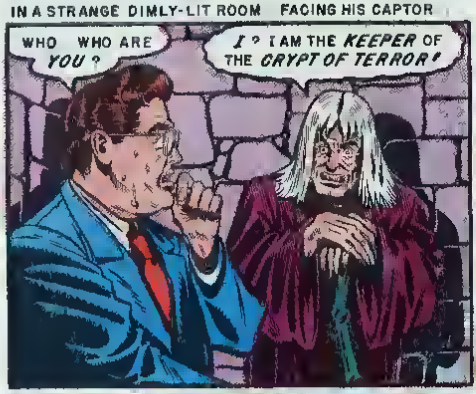





GONE! DISAPPEARED INTO THIN AIR!

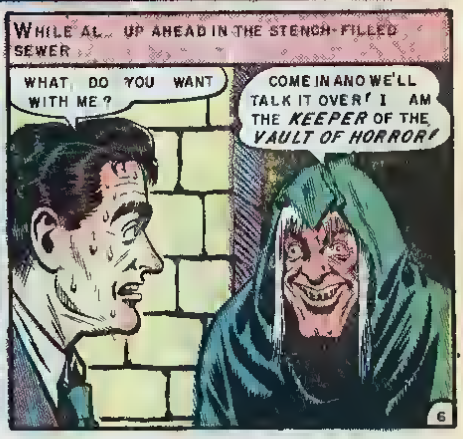

I'M GETTING OUT OF HERE!

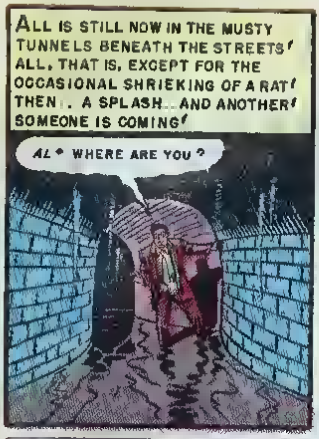

SUDDENLY, AS AL TERRIFIED TURNS A CORNER IN THE TUNNELS
GULP... OH!
COME IN! I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU!


MEANWHILE, THE OTHER ONE, BILL, FINDS HIMSELF IN A STRANGE DIMLY-LIT ROOM FACING HIS CAPTOR
WHO WHO ARE YOU?
I? I AM THE KEEPER OF THE CRYPT OF TERROR!


THE CRYPT OF WHAT?
TERROR! DON'T YOU KNOW WHAT TERROR IS?

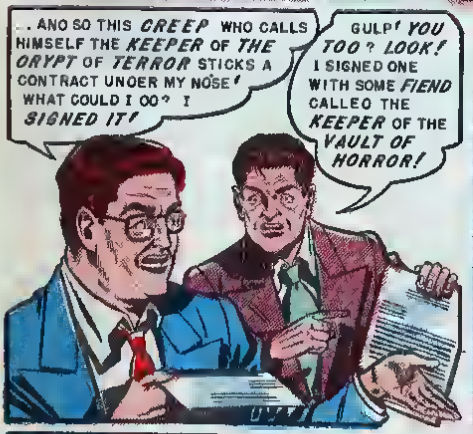

YOU.. YOU'RE DARN TOOTIN' I DO... AND .. YOU .. YOU AREN'T H...H.. HELPING ME FORGET IT!
GOOD! I'VE BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO MEETING YOU! I HAVE A PROPOSITION


WHILE AL.. UP AHEAD IN THE STENCH-FILLED SEWER..
WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH ME?
COME IN AND WE'LL TALK IT OVER! I AM THE KEEPER OF THE VAULT OF HORROR!

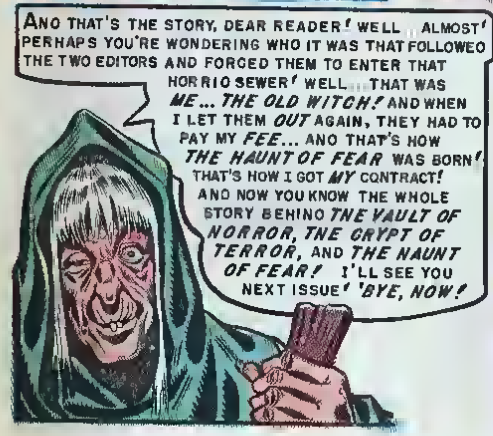










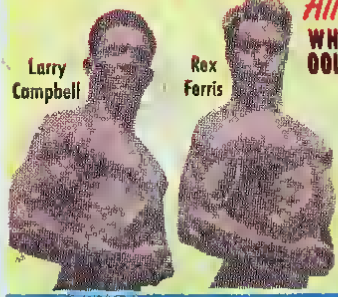


THE TERRIFIED EDITORS OF THE *HAUNT OF FEAR* WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHICH STORY IN THIS MAGAZINE YOU LIKED BEST! VOTE FOR *YOUR FAVORITE!*

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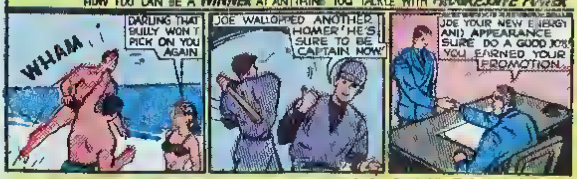
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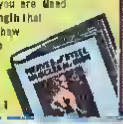
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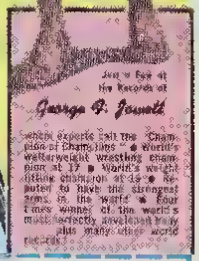
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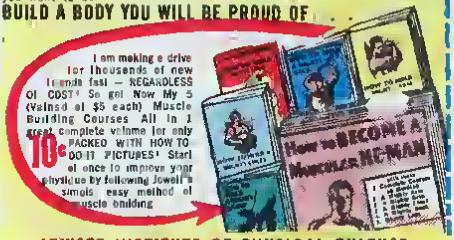


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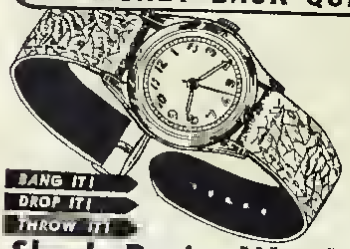
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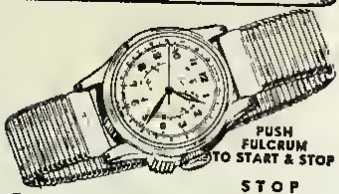
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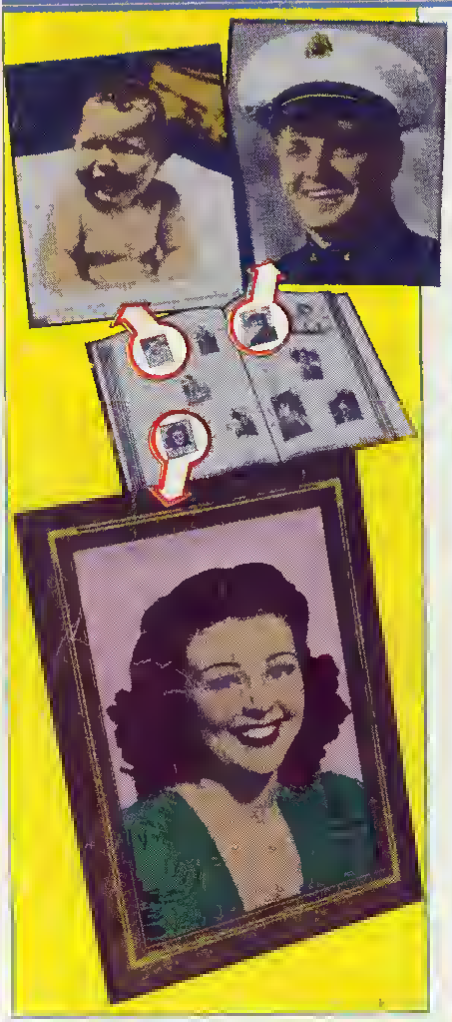
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Haunt of Fear Nov Dec, 1950—Vol 1 No 4 Published Bi-monthly by Fables Publishing Co Inc at 225 Lafayette St New York 12 N Y William M Gaines, Editor Albert B Feldstein, Associate Editor Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York N Y One year subscription in the U S 60c plus 15c postage—total 75c—elsewhere $1.50 Entire contents copyrighted 1950 by Fables Publishing Co., Inc Printed in U. S. A.
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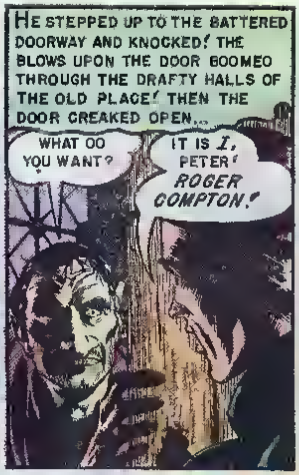
THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

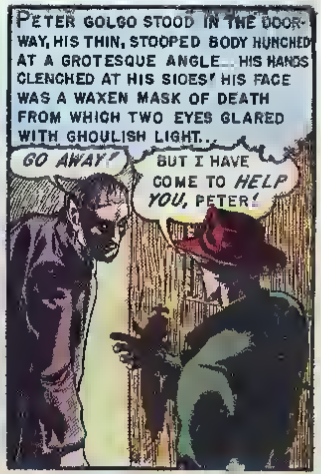


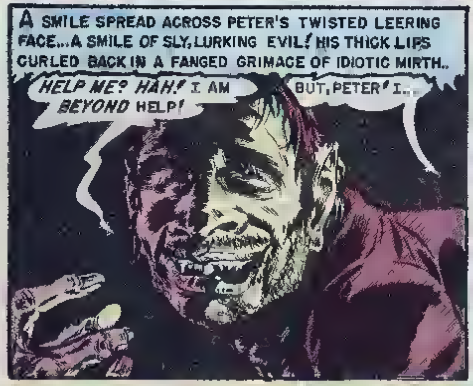

SOON, ROGER FOUND HIMSELF ON A DESERTED STREET! THE PEOPLE HAD ALL DISAPPEARED... HIDDEN BEHIND LOCKED DOORS AND DRAWN BLINDS...
IT MUST BE SOMETHING HORRIBLE THEY FEAR! I WONDER IF I OUGHT TO TAKE COVER, TOO? OH, OH! TOO LATE! HERE HE COMES!
A STOOPED FIGURE SHUFFLED AROUND A CORNER AND UP THE EMPTY STREET! AS HE DREW NEAR, ROGER NOTICED THAT HE WAS A HUNCHBACK
GOLGO! MY OLD FRIEND, PETER GOLGO!
HUH?
PETER! YOU DO NOT REMEMBER ME? I'M ROGER... YOUR OLD COLLEGE CHUM! BUT HOW BAD YOU LOOK, PETER!
GO AWAY! LEAVE ME ALONE! LEAVE ME ALONE!
WHA.. WHY PETER! IT IS I, ROGER! DON'T YOU.. REMEMBER?
PETER GOLGO SHUFFLED ON UP THE STREET AND DISAPPEARED INTO A DARK ALLEY! ROGER COMPTON STOOD WATCHING! AMAZED!
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! HE DID NOT KNOW ME! WHY, WE WERE THE BEST OF FRIENDS! BUT NOW, HOW STRANGE HE LOOKS AND ACTS.
CAUTIOUSLY, THE TOWNSFOLK THAT HAD BARRICADED THEMSELVES EMERGED FROM THEIR HIDING PLACES...
YOU'RE A STRANGER HERE, AREN'T YOU?
WHY, YES! I..
YOU TALKED TO HIM...
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE! HE'S BAD.. A FIEND!
PETER? A FIEND? NONSENSE! WE WERE FRIENDS AT COLLEGE!
THAT WAS A LONG TIME AGO!
BEFORE HE BECAME WHAT HE IS TODAY.. A GHOUL!
2

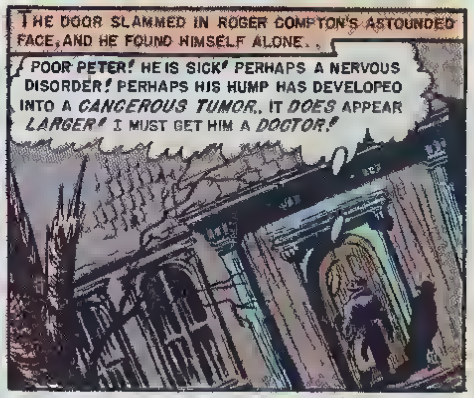

BUT...A GHOUL FEEDS UPON DEAD FLESH!
YES! AND I SAW HIM..
"IT WAS ABOUT TWO YEARS AGO! I WAS RETURNING FROM A GRANGE MEETING! I WAS TAKING A SHORT CUT THROUGH THE CEMETERY WHEN..."
A LANTERN! SOMEONE DIGGING..
"I EDGED CLOSER! AND THEN I SAW WHO IT WAS."
PETER GOLGO! THE HUNCHBACK! ROBBING A GRAVE...
FROM MY HIDING PLACE, I COULD NOT SEE WHAT HE WAS DOING TO THE CORPSE HE HAD DUG DOWN TO..BUT WHEN PETER HAD LEFT, I APPROACHED THE DESECRATED GRAVE..."
GOOD LORD! THE CORPSE... IS PARTIALLY DEVOURED! HE...HE'S A GHOUL!
ROGER COMPTON LISTENED, HORRIFIED, TO THE OLD MAN'S TALE! WHEN HE HAD FINISHED..
I CANNOT BELIEVE IT! PETER WAS NORMAL AT SCHOOL.. EVEN BRILLIANT!
BUT YOU'VE SEEN HIM! DOES HE BEHAVE NORMALLY NOW? DOES HE?
I'VE GOT TO SEE HIM AGAIN! TALK TO HIM! GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS! WHERE DOES HE LIVE?
IN THE OLD HOUSE ON THE HILL! BUT WE WARN YOU..KEEP AWAY FROM HIM! HE'S EVIL!
ROGER TURNED TO GO, BUT ONE OF THE TOWNSFOLK CAUGHT HIM BY THE ARM..
MY LITTLE GIRL DIED OF PNEUMONIA LAST WEEK! TWO NIGHTS AGO HER GRAVE WAS BROKEN OPEN AND HER LITTLE BODY STRIPPED OF ITS FLESH!
THE TWELFTH GRAVE IN TWO YEARS! TWELVE GRAVES..DESECRATED! THEIR CORPSES DEVOURED! THE MAN IS INHUMAN!
3

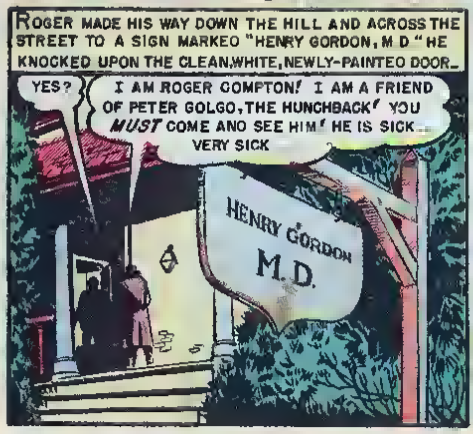

ROGER BROKE AWAY FROM THE WIDE-EYED TOWNSPEOPLE..AND THEIR HORRIBLE TALES...AND MADE HIS WAY UP THE HILL TO THE RAMSHACKLE HOUSE THAT WAS PETER GOLGO'S HOME...
HOW RUN-DOWN AND WEATHERBEATEN IT IS!

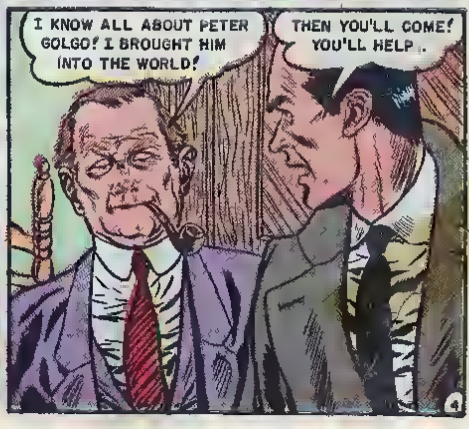

HE STEPPED UP TO THE BATTERED DOORWAY AND KNOCKED! THE BLOWS UPON THE DOOR BOOMED THROUGH THE DRAFTY HALLS OF THE OLD PLACE! THEN THE DOOR CREAKED OPEN...
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
IT IS I, PETER! ROGER COMPTON!


PETER GOLGO STOOD IN THE DOORWAY, HIS THIN, STOOPED BODY HUNCHED AT A GROTESQUE ANGLE... HIS HANDS CLENCHED AT HIS SIDES! HIS FACE WAS A WAXEN MASK OF DEATH FROM WHICH TWO EYES GLARED WITH GHOULISH LIGHT...
GO AWAY!
BUT I HAVE COME TO HELP YOU, PETER!


A SMILE SPREAD ACROSS PETER'S TWISTED LEERING FACE...A SMILE OF SLY, LURKING EVIL! HIS THICK LIPS CURLED BACK IN A FANGED GRIMACE OF IDIOTIC MIRTH..
HELP ME? HAH! I AM BEYOND HELP!
BUT, PETER! I...


THE DOOR SLAMMED IN ROGER COMPTON'S ASTOUNDED FACE, AND HE FOUND HIMSELF ALONE..
POOR PETER! HE IS SICK! PERHAPS A NERVOUS DISORDER! PERHAPS HIS HUMP HAS DEVELOPED INTO A CANCEROUS TUMOR. IT DOES APPEAR LARGER! I MUST GET HIM A DOCTOR!


ROGER MADE HIS WAY DOWN THE HILL AND ACROSS THE STREET TO A SIGN MARKED "HENRY GORDON, M.D." HE KNOCKED UPON THE CLEAN, WHITE, NEWLY-PAINTED DOOR..
YES?
I AM ROGER COMPTON! I AM A FRIEND OF PETER GOLGO, THE HUNCHBACK! YOU MUST COME AND SEE HIM! HE IS SICK... VERY SICK
HENRY GORDON M.D.


I KNOW ALL ABOUT PETER GOLGO! I BROUGHT HIM INTO THE WORLD!
THEN YOU'LL COME! YOU'LL HELP..
4


NO! I WILL NOT COME! I CANNOT HELP HIM!
YOU...YOU CALL YOURSELF A *DOCTOR?* WHY... YOU'RE JUST LIKE THE REST OF THEM... NARROW-MINDED... BIGOTED...SUPERSTITIOUS!
WHAT *THEY* BELIEVE, MR GOMPTON, IS *TRUE!*
YOU MEAN, PETER GOLGO *IS A GHOUL!*
NOT *NE*...EXAGTLY! BUT IT IS A LONG STORY! SIT DOWN AND I WILL TELL YOU ABOUT IT!
I AM QUITE COMFORTABLE STANDING, SIR! PROCEED!
FOR THE MOST PART, I FEEL SORRY FOR WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO PETER GOLGO! IT IS NOT HIS FAULT! BUT I AM GETTING AHEAD OF MYSELF...
"WHEN HE WAS A CHILD, THE OTHER CHILDREN MADE FUN OF HIM... THREW STONES AT HIM BECAUSE OF HIS HUNCHED BACK..."
NYAAAN! G'WAN HOME, GIMPY!
YOUR MOTHER'S GALLIN' YUH, HUMPY!
HUMP BACK! HUMP BACK! NYAAAH!
BUT PETER GOLGO HAD NO *ORDINARY* HUMP ON HIS BACK, MR. GOMPTON! AND TODAY, WHAT HE CARRIES ABOUT ON HIS SHOULDERS IS THE CAUSE OF ALL HIS HORRIBLE ACTIONS... THE GRAVE-DIGGING... EVERYTHING!
WHAT... WHAT *IS IT*... THIS HUMP?
IT IS A *MONSTER!* A HORRIBLE LITTLE MONSTER THAT *TORMENTS* PETER GOLGO.. *CREATES UNBEARABLE PAIN*... *TORTURES* PETER INTO DOING *ITS* BIDDING! PETER IS NOT THE GHOUL! *THE MONSTER IS THE FLESH-EATER!*
BUT, HOW DID IT *GET* THERE!
5


PETER WAS *BORN* WITH IT! IT WAS AN UNDEVELOPED SIAMESE TWIN THAT WAS ATTATCHED TO HIS BACK! ONLY IT NEVER DEVELOPED! YES, IT WAS ALIVE... BUT DORMANT! AND THEN... THREE YEARS AGO... THE CHANGE CAME!
IT BEGAN TO GROW, DOCTOR?
YES! HE CAME TO ME! IT LAY FACE DOWNWARD ON HIS BACK... ITS HANDS CLASPED ABOUT HIS SHOULDERS! IT HAD ITS OWN DIGESTIVE SYSTEM, ITS OWN LUNGS... BUT ITS LEGS RAN OFF INTO THE LUMPY FLESH OF HIS BODY!
I NEVER KNEW! IN ALL THOSE YEARS AT COLLEGE...
WHEN HE CAME TO ME, ITS *EYES* WERE *OPEN!* IT HAD DEVELOPED A *TINY SET OF TEETH!* IT WAS UGLY... *UGLY!*
I COULD NOT REMOVE IT! I COULD NOT KILL IT! IT WOULD HAVE MEANT PETER'S LIFE AS WELL! AND SO I TOLD HIM IT WOULD HAVE TO REMAIN THERE... FOR ALL OF HIS DAYS!
BUT I NEVER SUSPECTED IT WOULD BE A THING OF EVIL! IT DEMANDED FLESH... *DEAD FLESH*... FOR FOOD! IT WAS A *GHOUL!* AND PETER WAS FORCED TO OBEY! IT WAS CAPABLE OF INFLICTING *EXCRUCIATING PAIN* UPON HIM...
BUT YOU MUST DO SOMETHING *NOW*, DOCTOR! YOU MUST SAVE HIM!
I CAN DO NOTHING... *NOTHING!*
COMPTON WALKED OUT OF THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE... TEARS IN HIS EYES! THERE HAD TO BE *SOMETHING*... *SOME WAY* OF HELPING POOR PETER... OF FREEING HIM FROM THE MONSTER THAT CONTROLLED HIM...
I'LL GO BACK! I'LL TELL HIM THAT I KNOW... EVERYTHING, NOW!


COMPTON MADE HIS WAY UP THE HILL AGAIN... TO THE OLD HOUSE! AS HE APPROACHED, HE HEARD VOICES... ARGUING...
ONE OF THEM IS PETER! I RECOGNIZE HIS VOICE! THE OTHER ..IS HIGHER.. MORE FRENZIED..
IT MUST BE THE MONSTER! THEY'RE FIGHTING ABOUT SOMETHING...
ROGER COMPTON CROUCHED DOWN BELOW THE SHADED WINDOW... LISTENING...
NO! NEVER! I'LL NEVER DO IT! NEVER... AAAAAAAAAAGH!
IT WAS PETER SCREAMING IN PAIN! THE MONSTER WAS TORTURING HIM... FORCING HIM TO DO SOMETHING THAT HE DIDN'T WANT TO DO...
NO! I WON'T! ROBBING GRAVES WAS BAD ENOUGH! WATCHING YOU EAT THE ROTTED FLESH... BUT NOW! KILL FOR YOU? FOR FRESH FLESH? NEVER... NEVER!
IT WAS HORRIBLE TO LISTEN TO THEM! PETER CONTINUED TO REFUSE...AND THEN...
E-E-Y-A-A-A-H!
AFTER THE SCREAM... SILENCE! ROGER COMPTON RUSHED INTO THE HOUSE! WHAT HE SAW MADE HIM SICK! THE THING WAS THERE... EXACTLY AS THE DOCTOR HAD DESCRIBED IT...
YES! HEE,HEE! IT WAS THERE! THE LITTLE MONSTER, IN A FIT OF OF RAGE, HAD CLIMBED A TRIFLE HIGHER ON PETER GOLGO'S SACK AND BITTEN HIM TO DEATH! SILLY LITTLE GHOUL... IT DIDN'T REALIZE IT WOULD KILL ITSELF, TOO! YOU SEE, THESE TWINS HAD ONLY ONE HEART... THE ONE IN PETER'S BODY! WELL, READ ON FRIENDS! THERE ARE MORE CHILLS WAITING... IF YOU CAN TAKE IT!



He released the fire-bomb he had been preparing so carefully in his workroom . . . and with a consuming sense of triumph he watched it flicker and begin to glow. No one else in the small plane had seen him fiddling with it . . . his wife and all the others were too absorbed in the Mexican landscape unfolding thousands of feet below them. In another sixty seconds the bomb would splutter into angry purple and crimson . . . and it would be time for him to leave them here! He almost laughed at the prospect. He would be abandoning them fifteen thousand feet in the air, in a plane doomed to death by fire within three minutes. They would never be able to land the flaming craft . . . and his guile in mutilating the chutes closed off the only other avenue of escape! Secretly he had slashed the nylon of all the parachutes but one . . . and he was slithering into the only good chute at this very moment!

The sound of the fire-bomb was audible now. He could see the horror on his wife's face as she turned and stared at him in dismay. The others were rising too . . . he began to giggle even as he ran to the escape hatch and flung it open. They were screaming at him, some were beginning to curse and to moan. But it would do them no good! They were all doomed to death by fire . . . and *he* would profit by it. The insurance money on his wife's life . . . and on the plane which he was about to destroy . . would make him a rich man!

The metal door was wide open, and without a backward glance he threw himself far out into space. He whirled as if caught in the funnel of a twister . . . then he felt the sharp pull on his back and stomach as the chute mushroomed open above him and stopped his headlong descent almost instantly. Off in the distance he saw the plane wobbling in its path . . . smoke beginning to trail through its windows and a tongue of bright red and yellow enveloping one of the wings. His plan had worked! They would all be consumed in fire within the next five minutes . . . and he would be rich! And *safe!*

He looked down at the Mexican countryside beneath him, and his heart almost stopped beating. Directly under him, open like the jaws of some primitive monster, was Mount Chachitax. And from its gaping mouth there issued great plumes of deadening black smoke! Now and then he saw the swirl of fire far down in the heart of the turbulent smoke . . . and he was heading directly into it! Some power which neither his will nor his parachute could resist was sucking him directly down into that open mouth . . . into the awful fires of Mount Chachitax! All at once his chute seemed to lose its remaining power and he was shrouded in the smoke and could feel the searing heat all around him. The deadly fires of Mount Chachitax were claiming him. Like the occupants of the plane he was doomed to death by fire . . . in the very mouth of the erupting volcano!

THE VAULT OF HORROR!






GET THE PICTURE? HERE'S A SWEET YOUNG GIRL... LINDA CROSS BY NAME... WHO'S TRYING TO SAVE HER BROTHER PAUL'S HEALTH BY MOVING HIM OFF THE BEATEN TRACK! SHE'S FORCING HIM INTO A VACATION FROM THE BOTTLE AND... BUT LET'S PEEK INTO THEIR ROOM A SHORT TIME LATER!
HE'S GONE! AND IN HIS STATE OF MIND... ANYTHING MIGHT HAPPEN! IT'S DANGEROUS FOR HIM TO WANDER AROUND THE STREETS ALONE...
LINDA RUSHES TO THE LOCAL POLICE STATION!
YOU'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING! PAUL'S NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR HIMSELF! IN A STRANGE TOWN LIKE THIS, HE MAY GET HURT OR
I HAVE YOUR DESCRIPTION OF HIM, SEÑORITA I'LL ATTEND TO THE CASE MYSELF! GO BACK TO YOUR HOTEL, AND GET SOME REST!
THE HOURS TICK BY, AND STILL THERE IS NO WORD FOR LINDA CROSS...
I NEVER SHOULD HAVE LEFT HIM... EVEN FOR A MINUTE! A STRANGER... AND IN HIS CONDITION! I CAN'T SIT AROUND ANY LONGER I'LL GO MAD!
HAVE YOU FOUND OUT ANYTHING ABOUT MY BROTHER?
HUH? OH, SEÑORITA... ER CROSS! NO WORD YET... WHICH IS GOOD NEWS IN A CASE OF THIS SORT...
MAN FOUND DEAD DOWN AT THE TUNNEL, EL JEFE! STRANGE CIRCUMSTANCES! YOU HAD BETTER COME!
2

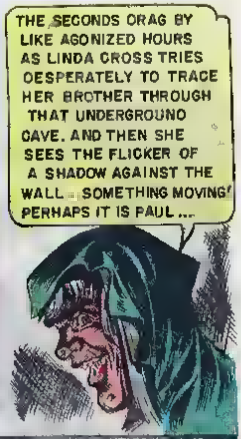

...AN AMENICAN. NO ONE AT THE TUNNEL COULD IDENTIFY HIM! AND HIS BODY... PARTIALLY DEVOURED AS IF BY SOME WILD BEAST!
...UNIDENTIFIED..: AMENICAN! PARTIALLY DEVOURED?
YOU HAD BETTER COME ALONG WITH US, SEÑONITA! THIS VICTIM... BUT LET'S NOT JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS! COME... WE HAVE A CAR WAITING.
THIS TUNNEL... IT IS A NIGHT-CLUB -. A PLACE WHENE MANY AMENICAN TOUNISTS GATHER! THE DEAD MAN COULD BE ANY OF THEM!
TUNNEL... W-WHAT AN ODD NAME... FOR A NIGHT-CLUB!
THE TUNNEL IS ODD IN MORE WAYS THAN ITS CHOICE OF NAME, SEÑORITA! IT APPEALS TO PEOPLE WHO SEEK THE BIZARRE AND WEIRD... BUT YOU WILL SEE FOR YOUNSELF! HERE IS THE OFFICE...
EL JEFE TOLD ONLY HALF THE STONY IN HIS DESCRIPTION OF THE STNANGE NIGHT-CLUB ITS NAME, FOR INSTANCE, IS OFFICIALLY THE TUNNEL OF TERROR! AND TERRON IS WHAT LINDA FEELS AS SHE STANDS IN THE MANAGER'S OFFICE...
...AND AFTER THE LIGHTS WENT ON, WE FOUND HIM! HIS BODY... AS IF A WILD ANIMAL...
SPARE US YOUN OPINIONS, PLEASE! THE SHROUD,.. WILL YOU...
I-IT'S... NOT MY BROTHER! THANK HEAVENS! NOT PAUL! HE'S STILL SAFE.
SO FAR AS WE KNOW, SEÑORITA...
3


THIS PLACE... THIS TUNNEL...IT SOUNDS LIKE THE KIND OF SPOT THAT PAUL WOULD BE ATTRACTED TO..EVEN IN HIS PRESENT CONDITION! COULD I...FOR MY OWN PEACE OF MIND...?
VISIT IT? OF COURSE... IF YOU THINK THERE'S ANY CHANCE OF YOUR BROTHER BEING HERE!
THIS IS THE ENTRANCE, SEÑORITA... SOMEWHAT UNUSUAL, AS YOU WILL FIND THE REST OF THE TUNNEL OF TERROR TO BE!
THROUGH THE TRAP-DOOR AND DOWN THE LONG FLIGHT OF STEPS, LINDA CROSS GROPES HER WAY...INTO A PLACE OF COMPLETE DARKNESS! THE AIR IS DANK AND CLAMMY...THE WORD TUNNEL SEEMS APT! UNKNOWN TO HER, SHE HAS DESCENDED INTO ONE OF THE CATACOMBS SURROUNDING THE TOWN...
I CAN'T SEE A THING! IT SEEMS LIKE AN UNEXPLORED CAVE! IS THIS SOME KIND OF A JOKE? I'LL SOON.. OOOHH!
WELCOME TO THE TUNNEL OF TERROR!
W-WHAT WHO..?
A TABLE FOR THE SEÑORITA? RIGHT THIS WAY...STEP CAREFULLY, PLEASE!
WHAT KIND OF PLACE IS THIS? NO LIGHTS AND THIS EERIENESS..
ALLOW ME, SEÑORITA, TO EXPLAIN! OUR CLUB IS ACTUALLY LOCATED IN ONE OF THE CAVES USED FOR BURIAL LONG CENTURIES AGO. FOR NOVELTY WE STRIVE TO KEEP THE ILLUSION OF DEATH!
BUT ASIDE FROM OUR SUPERFICIAL APPEARANCE, I'M SURE YOU WILL FIND US CONGENIAL! OUR WHISKY IS THE FINEST..
IN THAT CASE PERHAPS YOU CAN HELP ME! HAS A TALL BLOND MAN BEEN HERE.. SOMEONE WHO LOOKS SICK? AS IF...ER..HE MIGHT HAVE A FEVER?
4


PERHAPS THIS IS THE ONE YOU SEARCH FOR?
YIIII!
JUST A BIT OF THE ENTERTAINMENT WE PROVIDE, SEÑORITA! NOTHING TO FEAR, I ASSURE...
WHAT'S THAT?
AIEEE
PLEASE DON'T BECOME ALARMED ...THERE'S BEEN AN ACCIDENT HERE...
THIS PLACE... LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF A NIGHTMARE! ANOTHER BODY.. I-I HAVE TO SEE ... PERHAPS IT'S PAUL...
A TOURIST...
AMERICAN.
LET ME SEE... PLEASE, LET ME SEE! IT MAY BE MY BROTHER...GET OUT OF MY WAY!
NOT PAUL! BUT...IT'S HORRIBLE! AS THOUGH...IT HAD BEEN EATEN...
AT THAT MOMENT SOMETHING COMPELS LINDA CROSS TO LOOK UP, AND ACROSS THE ROOM SHE SEES SOMETHING WHICH MAKES HER BLOOD GROW COLD...
PAUL! PAUL... IT'S ME!
H-HEY, SEÑORITA! WATCH OUT...
GIVE ME THAT TORCH... IT'S MY BROTHER! HE'S SICK... HE NEEDS ME! QUICK... I MUST FIND HIM!
5


HE DIDN'T RECOGNIZE ME! THIS CRAZY PLACE...IT'S FRIGHTENED HIM! I'VE GOT TO FIND PAUL... GET HIM OUT OF HERE...


A SCREAM! AND WITH THE ECHOES IT SEEMS TO COME FROM EVERY SIDE ALL AT ONCE! THE BEAST... IT MUST HAVE STRUCK AGAIN! I-I MUST FIND PAUL... MUST..


THE SECONDS DRAG BY LIKE AGONIZED HOURS AS LINDA CROSS TRIES DESPERATELY TO TRACE HER BROTHER THROUGH THAT UNDERGROUND CAVE. AND THEN SHE SEES THE FLICKER OF A SHADOW AGAINST THE WALL...SOMETHING MOVING! PERHAPS IT IS PAUL...


HE'S AFRAID EVEN OF ME! IN HIS MENTAL STATE HE MUST BE TERRIFIED.. CAN'T TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF! IT'S UP TO ME TO... OOOOOFF!


ANOTHER CORPSE! HORRIBLY MUTILATED! THE BEAST! IT'S FOUND ANOTHER VICTIM!

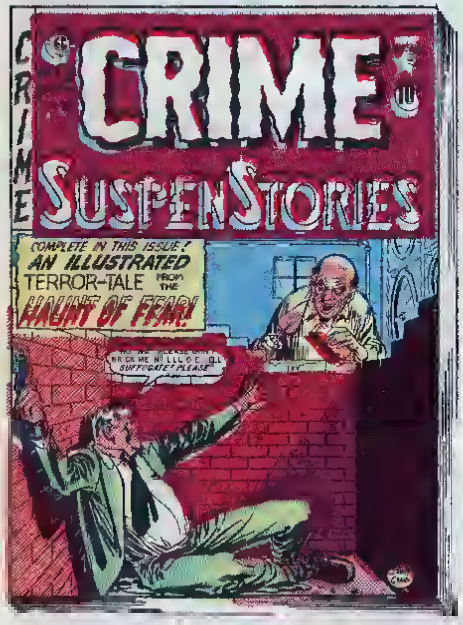

THAT SOUND...WHA...? PAUL! YOU'RE SAFE...SAFE!


IT'S ME... YOUR SISTER LINDA! YOU WON'T HAVE TO RUN AWAY ANY LONGER. WE'LL GET OUT OF HERE TOGETHER! YOU'RE SAFE!
SAFE...WON'T HAVE TO RUN...


...I'M GOING TO TAKE YOU OUT OF HERE, PAUL! DON'T BE AFRAID!
...AFRAID...
THAT LOOK ON HIS FACE! THE EXCITEMENT HERE HAS CAUSED ANOTHER MENTAL COLLAPSE! HE DOESN'T KNOW ME...
NO...NO! PAUL... I DON'T MEAN YOU ANY HARM! I WANT TO SAVE YOU...HELP YOU ESCAPE FROM WHATEVER IT IS THAT KILLED THOSE OTHERS!
LET GO OF ME, PAUL...
YOU...YOUR TEETH...THEY CUT MY HAND! YOU LEFT A MARK...LIKE A WILD...
N-NO...PLEASE...YOUR OWN SISTER! THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING ...IT'S A HORRIBLE NIGHTMARE PAUL!
I-IT CAN'T BE YOU MY OWN BROTHER. YOU'RE THE MANIAC WHO HAS MURDERED THE OTHERS! YOU'RE THE MONSTER WHO CRAVES HUMAN FLESH!
A TALE OF BROTHERLY AFFECTION, WASN'T IT? SORT OF A FAMILY PLOT, HEH, HEH, HEH! JUST ONE THING TO REMEMBER! TO THIS DAY, NO ONE HAS APPREHENDED THE MONSTER WHO STALKS THE TUNNEL OF TERROR! SO IF YOU'RE PLANNING A VACATION... HEH, HEH! WELL, I'LL BE SEEING YOU IN MY OWN MAGAZINE, THE VAULT OF HORROR!
THE END...

SUSPENSTORY FANS!

HERE'S ANOTHER MAGAZINE SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO *TERRORIZE* YOU... TO MAKE THE BLOOD FREEZE IN YOUR VEINS! FOR *SPINE-TINGLING* TALES AT THEIR ILLUSTRATED BEST... *READ:*



AN ENTERTAINING COMIC

ANOTHER *"NEW TREND"* SURE-FIRE WINNER!

AN ENTERTAINING COMIC

ON SALE NOW AT ALL NEWSSTANDS!

CUNNING

The Camp lay in almost total ruin around him . . . it was hard to believe that this mass of smashed rock and splintered wood had once been considered a model Concentration Camp by the Nazis who built it. Most of the wooden buildings where the prisoners had been held in "protective custody" were now reduced to charred heaps . . . it would have made Herr Kanzler sad to see what this most recent Allied bombing had done to the Camp he once ruled with such ferocity and absolute control. But Herr Kanzler could *not* see the effect of the bombing . . . he would never see again! It was only by a quirk of fate that he was alive, in fact . . . alive and left completely alone in the Camp as the Allied armies swept toward Berlin Days before the Gestapo Detachment had disintegrated and disappeared, and the prisoners had broken free as soon as they learned the Camp was unguarded. Now the place was a scene of weird desolation and ruin, totally uninhabited except for Herr Kanzler, the Camp Commandant. Why did he remain? There were two reasons. it was the place where he had enjoyed complete and unlimited power, and his Prussian mind refused to abandon it. And having been blinded in the last bombing . . . and a man

who was utterly friendless . . . he COULDN'T leave!

Frantically he groped his way over the rubble. The explosions nearby and the quivering of the earth under him made it evident that the bombings had started again. He had to get to safety now . . . or else! The steel Bunker was probably undamaged, and it was his goal and his salvation. Once inside those thick metal walls, he would be safe from the bombs . . . and after the Allies had swept over the area he could surrender and throw himself on their mercy! He would escape yet . . . *cunning* would do it!

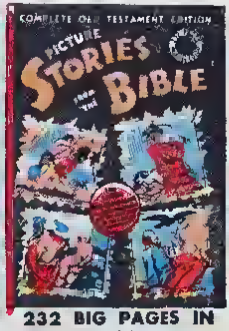
His fingers gripped the steel door and inwardly he exulted. He had found the Bunker . even in his blindness he had shown a will-to-live which surpassed that of the prisoners he had destroyed!

A bomb dropped nearby and in desperation he swung the heavy door closed. It clicked loudly and he could barely hear the explosions any longer But another sound had claimed his attention . an almost inaudible sound which filled him with dread. It was a low hiss . . . and its meaning was well-known to Herr Kanzler. GAS was filling the room . . . the click of the door had automatically turned it on! For this was *not* the Bunker . . . he was locked tightly in the ***LETHAL CHAMBER!*** At once the truth flooded his brain . . . he was doomed! Doomed to the same death which he had administered to so many thousands of others!



144 BIG PAGES IN FULL COLOR

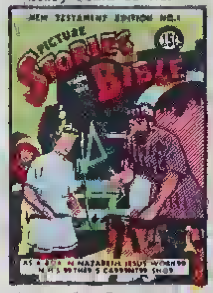
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THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE

Hee, hee . . . well BUBBLE my CAULDRON! It's time for another HEATED discussion about THIS . . . my very own magazine, *THE HAUNT OF FEAR!* As I'm sure you've noticed by now, those two old COOTS, the CRYPT-KEEPER and the VAULT-KEEPER each have a story in this issue! And therein lies a tale! As you may recall, I cleverly tricked both of those REVOLTING old GHOULS into signing contracts whereby I would appear in each of their magazines. This gave me a decided advantage! I was serene in my glory . . when one dark night, as I was brewing an evil concoction in my CAULDRON, these two nauseating buzzards sneaked up behind me and shoved me . . *screaming* . . into the seething mess! For a few moments, it was a HOTLY contested battle . . but finally I gave in! Although I was BOILING mad, I SIMMERED down and reluctantly signed TWENTY-year contracts with both of them to appear in *my* MAD-MAG! Now all three of us appear in each of the three magazines . . *THE HAUNT OF FEAR, THE VAULT OF HORROR,* and *TALES FROM THE CRYPT (OF TERROR)*! Everything is even . . they THINK! But here's a little secret! I still have the jump on them! The last time I was out panning the town red (with BLOOD, of course!) with our HORROR-HAPPY publisher, I was able . . by resorting to my feminine charms . . to inveigle him into featuring me in another of his magazines . . *CRIME SUSPENSTORIES*. Hee, hee . . that'll fix their COFFIN-CARTS!

Oh . . the publisher requested that I make an announcement! You may have noted that this issue of THE HAUNT OF FEAR is NUMBER 4! The last issue was number 17! This came about because we started numbering my mag with number 15 . . it was a change in title from a previous magazine which ran 14 issues! After publishing issues 15, 16, and 17, the United States Post Office requested that the *fourth* issue actually be numbered No. 4, rather than No 18! Well . . "ya can't fight City Hall!"

Now . . the review of the voting on last issue's stories! *NIGHTMARE*, by Crag, received the most votes to win first place Feldstein's *HORROR BENEATH THE STREETS* . . . which featured my two terror-fied editors . . . came in second. *TELEVISION TERROR* . . . masterpieced by Kurtzman . . . took third place honors. Ghastly Graham Ingels' *MONSTER MAKER* made fourth spot . . . and the text, *REPEAT PERFORMANCE*, limped into last place! Our popular text REPEATED its usual PERFORMANCE!

I have received many letters requesting information on how to subscribe to my magazine! Lazy, huh? Don't like running down to the corner newsstand and finding all the copies sold out, eh? Hee, hee, Well . . O.K.! Here's the dope straight from the opium den! Send 75¢ and your name and address to me,

THE OLD WITCH
Room 706, Dept 4
225 Lafayette Street
N. Y. C. 12, N. Y.

For this puny amount, you'll get a *full year's supply* . . six repulsive issues . . of *THE HAUNT OF FEAR!*

And now for the BIG SURPRISE ANNOUNCEMENT! Inspired and flattered by your thousands of letters requesting my picture, I flew downtown to the DUNGEON STUDIOS . . PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHERS where I had my lovely countenance forever immortalized by the camera! I left the photographer a raving maniac . . his equipment demolished, his studio a shambles, but the negative intact! Want my picture? I warn you, you know how *beautiful* I am! If you think you can stand it, send 10¢ in COIN to me at the above address and you will receive in return an actual PHOTOGRAPHIC REPRODUCTION! NOT a drawing . . but a *full* 5 by 7 glossy picture autographed by me! Is that a deal! You send a BLOODY mouthful!

And don't forget to write, you fiends! No one will associate with me . . so my only contact with the outside world is through your letters! Vote for your favorite stories! Hee, hee! I'll be seeing you along with the other two GHOULUNATICS in the next issue of THE VAULT OF HORROR! Bye, now!

THIS IS THE STORY OF THREE MEN WHO CREATED LIFE OUT OF DEATH...ONLY TO FIND AT THE END THAT THEIR OWN LIVES HAD TO BE GIVEN IN RETURN! I CALL IT...

THE Living Mummy

JACK DAVIS

MY TALE BEGINS ON A DISMAL STORMY NIGHT AT THE BLEAK LABORATORY-CASTLE OF PROFESSOR ARNOLD ZAMRON, WORLD-FAMOUS SCIENTIST.

I'M WARNING YOU FOR THE LAST TIME, KRAUSE! STAY AWAY FROM MY GIRL OR I'LL *KILL YOU!*

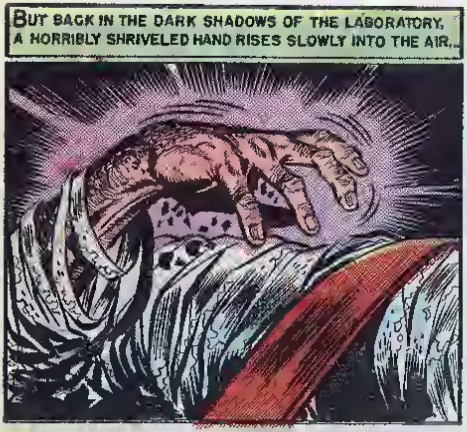
GLUG LET ME GO

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS OUTRAGE?

(GASP)...STEVENS IS CRAZY, SIR! HE...HE TRIED TO CHOKE ME

I DID NOT!

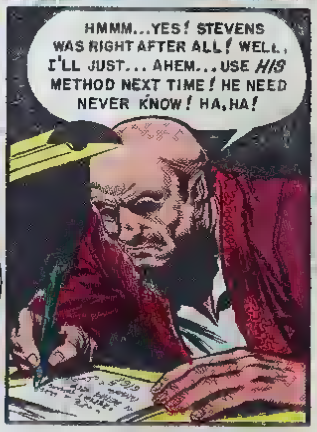

QUIET, STEVENS! WE ARE ON THE VERGE OF BRINGING THIS MUMMY...DEAD FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS BACK TO LIFE! I'LL DEAL WITH YOU LATER! KRAUSE! START THE EXPERIMENT!
AT ONCE, SIR!
THE WHINING HUM OF DYNAMOS BEGIN! STRANGE LIQUIDS BUBBLE UP IN WEIRD CHEMICAL COMBINATIONS. THE THREE MEN WORK FOR HOURS! THEN...
IT'S NO USE...THE MUMMY HASN'T MOVED! I'VE FAILED!
PERHAPS IF WE USED MY METHOD OF INCREASING VOLTAGE CAPACITY TO MAXIMUM POTENTIAL..
SHUT UP, STEVENS! DON'T TELL ME WHAT TO DO! I PAY YOU FOR ASSISTANCE, NOT FOR CRITICISM! YOU CAN CLEAN UP THIS MESS WHILE KRAUSE AND I RECORD OUR DATA! I'LL SEE YOU IN THE MORNING..
BUT STEVENS HAS OTHER IDEAS...
THAT CONCEITED WINDBAG! FOR YEARS I'VE BEEN TAKING HIS ORDERS...AND ALL THAT TIME MY METHODS, MY FORMULAS HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS FAME! THAT KRAUSE IS NO BETTER! WELL, I'LL SHOW BOTH OF THEM! I'LL BRING THE MUMMY BACK TO LIFE!
NOW IF I CAN MODIFY THAT RHEOSTAT TO PRODUCE A FORCE SUITABLE TO CHEMICAL REVIVAL...
STEVENS WORKS FAR INTO THE NIGHT! BRILLIANT LIGHTS FLICKER ON AND OFF CASTING SHADOWS AGAINST THE DOOR! SUDDENLY, THEY STOP! THEN... SILENCE! MINUTES PASS... THE DOOR SLOWLY OPENS
I..I DON'T BELIEVE IT! I WAS SURE MY METHOD WAS CORRECT! BUT THE CREATURE JUST LIES THERE DEAD! I'VE... I'VE FAILED LIKE THE REST!
WHAT WENT WRONG? GOT TO THINK! SLEEP...MUST HAVE SLEEP! SO TIRED...

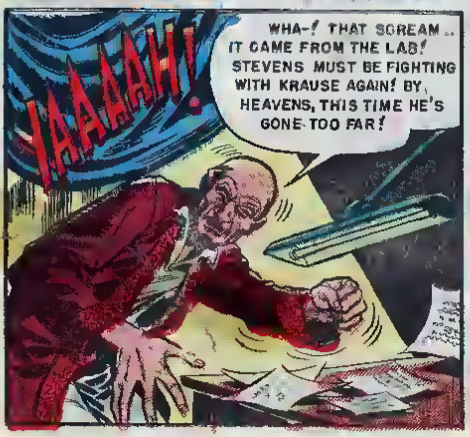

BUT BACK IN THE DARK SHADOWS OF THE LABORATORY, A HORRIBLY SHRIVELED HAND RISES SLOWLY INTO THE AIR...

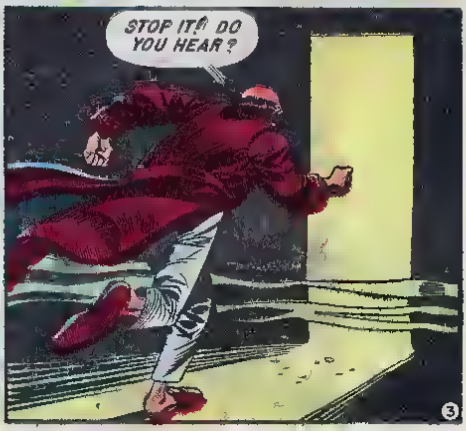

A FEW MINUTES LATER, KRAUSE... HEARING NOISES, WALKS UNWARILY INTO THE LABORATORY...
WHAT A MESS! YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE, STEVENS! WHERE ARE YOU? YOU THOUGHT I WAS ASLEEP, EH? WAIT 'TIL THE PROFESSOR HEARS OF THIS!


ANSWER ME OR I'LL... NO... NO! STAY AWAY...

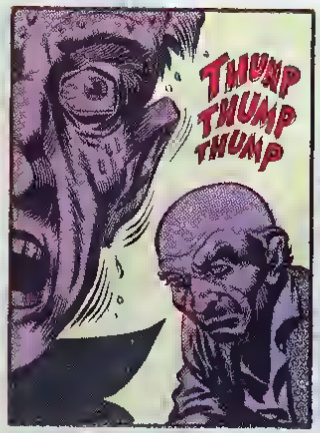

MEANWHILE, DEAR READER, PROFESSOR ZAMRON SITS AT HIS DESK ON THE TOP FLOOR OF THE CASTLE. HE ALSO HAS NOT BEEN ASLEEP...


HMMM...YES! STEVENS WAS RIGHT AFTER ALL! WELL, I'LL JUST... AHEM... USE HIS METHOD NEXT TIME! HE NEED NEVER KNOW! HA, HA!


YAAAAH!
WHA-! THAT SCREAM.. IT CAME FROM THE LAB! STEVENS MUST BE FIGHTING WITH KRAUSE AGAIN! BY HEAVENS, THIS TIME HE'S GONE TOO FAR!

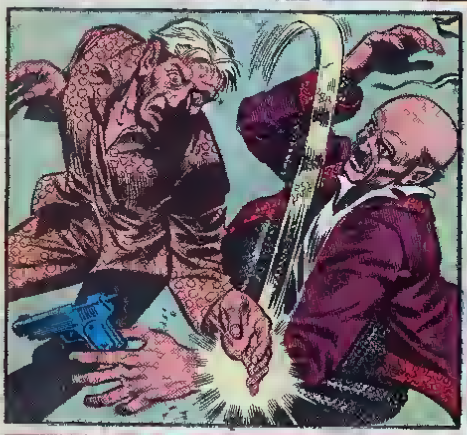

STOP IT! DO YOU HEAR?


NO..NO! THIS IS HORRIBLE! KRAUSE DEAD.. MY LABORATORY RUINED. AND THE MUMMY GONE!
PAUSING ONLY LONG ENOUGH TO GET A GUN FROM A NEARBY DRAWER, PROFESSOR ZAMRON RUNS TO STEVENS' ROOM...
STEVENS DID THIS! THE MAN IS A MANIAC! I SHOULD HAVE FIRED HIM LONG AGO! IF HE DOESN'T TELL ME WHAT HE'S DONE WITH THE MUMMY, I'LL...
A FEW SECONDS LATER, THE ANGRY SCIENTIST STANDS OVER THE SLEEPING STEVENS..
GET UP! GET UP!
THERE'S NO USE PRETENDING TO BE ASLEEP!
WHA.. WHAT'S GOING ON!
YOU KNOW VERY WELL! WHY DID YOU KILL KRAUSE? WHERE IS THAT MUMMY? ANSWER ME!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? KRAUSE KILLED? THE MUMMY GONE? IT CAN'T BE! UNLESS... THE MUMMY WERE ALIVE! THEN MY METHOD MUST HAVE WORKED!
YOU MUST BELIEVE ME! WHEN YOU LEFT, I EXPERIMENTED.. TRIED EVERYTHING... THOUGHT I FAILED! I CAME BACK TO MY ROOM, EXHAUSTED... AND I'VE BEEN ASLEEP ALL THIS TIME!
YOU'RE LYING! YOU'VE HIDDEN THAT MUMMY SOMEPLACE AS AN ALIBI!
BUT STEVENS DOESN'T PAY ANY ATTENTION TO THE PROFESSOR! HE RUNS OUT OF THE ROOM TO THE LAB BELOW...
COME BACK HERE!
I MUST SEE FOR MYSELF.. UGH! I WAS RIGHT! THE MUMMY IS ALIVE AND SOMEWHERE IN THIS HOUSE!
I'D SHOOT YOU DOWN RIGHT NOW, STEVENS... BUT I'M GOING TO SAVE YOU FOR THE POLICE!
NO! I SWEAR I DIDN'T KILL HIM! THE MUMMY DID IT! I... WHA... WHAT WAS THAT?
THUMP! THUMP!







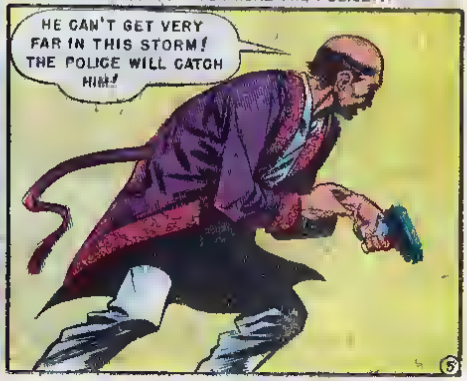


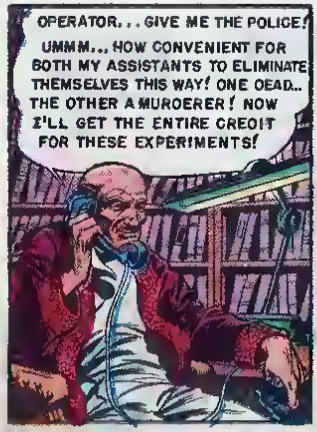


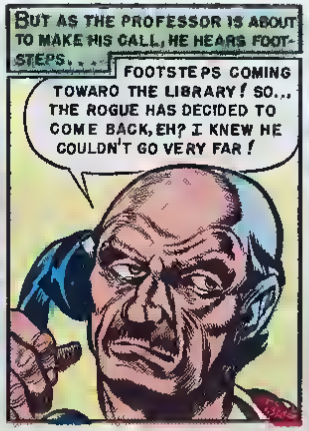
BUT *FATE* HAS DESTINED STEVENS FOR A DIFFERENT END! AS THE HYSTERICAL MAN STRUGGLES THROUGH THE HEAVY DOWNPOUR, HE FAILS TO SEE THE SHEER CLIFF YAWNING DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF HIM...



MEANWHILE, BACK IN THE CASTLE, PROFESSOR ZAMRON RUNS TO THE LIBRARY TO PHONE THE POLICE...















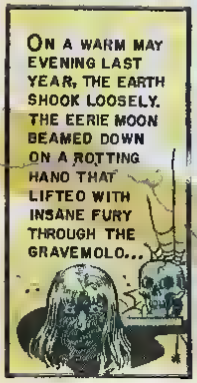
HEE, HEE! WELL, THAT'S MY STORY, DEAR READER! PROFESSOR ZAMRON WAS FINALLY CONVINCED THAT STEVENS' METHOD WAS CORRECT! THE *MUMMY* PROVED IT TO HIM! WHAT *HAPPENED* TO THE *MUMMY*? THE POLICE *NEVER FOUND HIM!* HE'S PROBABLY ROAMING AROUND THE COUNTRYSIDE *RIGHT NOW!* HEE, HEE! HE MIGHT EVEN BE PEEKING IN *YOUR* WINDOW... THE ONE *BEHIND* YOU! *DON'T LOOK!* YOU MAY NOT BE ABLE TO *STAND* IT!



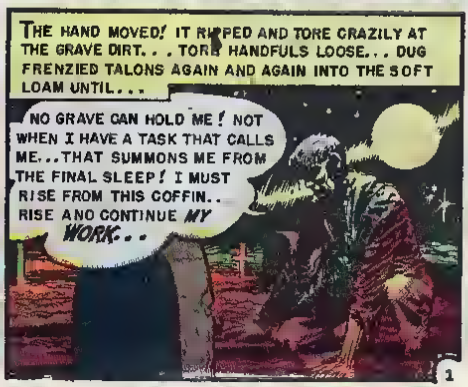
THE END

THE CRYPT OF TERROR







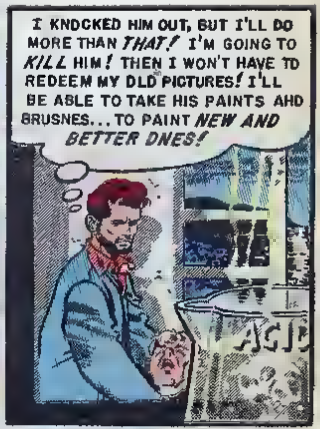


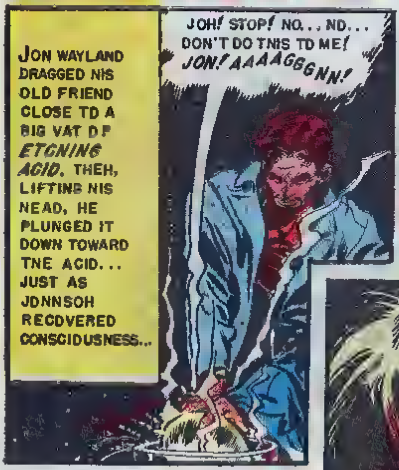

WITH THUMPING, SODDEN STEPS, THE DEAD MAN WALKED THE GRAVEYARD PATHS--
NOTHING MUST STOP ME! NOTHING! MY WORK...IT CALLS ME BACK FROM THE GRAVE! I MUST FINISH MY WORK... FINISH IT!
EEEYAAA!
MERCIFUL HEAVENS! I... I FEEL SICK!
HEE, HEE! A PRETTY SIGHT ON A MOONLIT NIGHT, EH? A DEAD MAN LUMBERING ALONG THE SIDEWALKS! SMELLING OF THE GRAVE! BUT... WHERE IS HE GOING? WHAT STRANGE WORK CALLS HIM FROM THE GRAVE? CURIOUS? HEE, HEE! LET'S TURN OVER THE MUSTY PAGES OF THE PAST... AND GO BACK SOME YEARS, TO A COLD OCTOBER AFTERNOON IN AN EASTERN CITY.
JON WAYLAND WAS ALIVE, THEN! YOUNG, AND HANDSOME. BUT POOR..
SOME PAINTER, I AM! I CAN'T SELL A THING! I CAN'T EVEN EARN ENOUGH TO BUY MYSELF A LOAF OF BREAD AND A BOTTLE OF MILK!
THE ONLY ENCOURAGING NEWS HE EVER GOT WAS FROM A MAGAZINE EDITOR...
I KNOW YOU PAINT MYSTERIOUS AND HORRIBLE THINGS, WAYLAND! A LOT OF FOLKS DON'T GO FOR IT, BUT I LIKE MACABRE THINGS! BUT... I CAN'T USE IT! SORRY!
CUBE
FINALLY, JON WAYLAND WAS FORCED TO PAWN HIS PAINTINGS IN ORDER TO EAT...
IT'S CHARITY, THAT'S WHAT IT IS! THESE THINGS AREN'T WORTH ANYTHING, BUT YOU NEVER CAN TELL. I MIGHT SELL 'EM... SOMETIME!
THANK YOU, THANK YOU!
ONE MORNING, SHORTLY AFTER JON HAD PAWNED EVERYTHING HE OWNED, THERE WAS A KNOCK ON HIS DOOR...
SPECIAL DELIVERY LETTER FOR JON WAYLAND!
SPECIAL DELIVERY? FOR ME? BUT, BUT I DON'T KNOW ANYBODY WHO WOULD WRITE TO ME!
RAP! RAP!

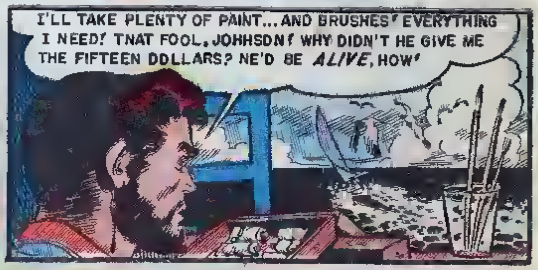

IT'S FROM THAT EDITOR... WHO LIKED MY STUFF! HE'S GETTING OUT A NEW HORROR MAGAZINE... WANTS ME TO DO ITS COVERS FOR HIM! I'LL GET A CONTRACT... MONEY! AT LAST!
SURE, I'LL GIVE YOU A CONTRACT... BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO BRING IN YOUR SAMPLES AGAIN! I'VE GOT TO SHOW THEM TO THE BIG BOSS!
BUT I... MY PICTURES... I HAD TO PAWN THEM...
JUST MY LUCK! THE FIRST BREAK I GET, I LOSE OUT ON! IF I COULO ONLY GET MY PICTURES BACK... OR PAINT SOME MORE... MAYBE I'D STILL GET THE CONTRACT!
GIVE YOU YOUR PICTURES? WITHOUT MONEY? HA! HA! HA! I MAY BE OLO, SON, BUT I'M NOT CRAZY! HA! HA!
PLEASE! PLEASE! YOU OON'T KNOW WHAT THIS MEANS TO ME! MY BIG CHANCE! IF I DON'T SHOW THAT EOITOR SOME SAMPLES, I'LL LOSE IT!
ONLY ONE HOPE LEFT! I'VE GOT TO SEE MY OLD FRIEND, BILLY JOHNSON! HE ALWAYS HELPED ME IN THE PAST. HE'LL HELP ME ONE MORE TIME! I KNOW HE WILL!
BILL JOHNSON GREETEO HIS FRIENO WITH HARSH WORDS AND GOLD SNEERS...
HELP YOU... AGAIN? AFTER ALL THE TIMES I'VE LOANED YOU MONEY IN THE PAST? YOU'RE JUS: A CHEAP BUM, WAYLANO! NOBODY'D GIVE YOU A JOB! WHO'RE YOU TRYING TO KIO?
I'M NOT LYING! IT'S TRUE! TRUE!
NOW GET OUT... AND STAY OUT! I NEVER WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN! YOU'RE A CHEAP, SPINELESS BUM! A NO-GOOD! A WORTHLESS SLUG!
I'LL NEVER GET THAT JOB NOW! I'M REALLY WASHED UP!

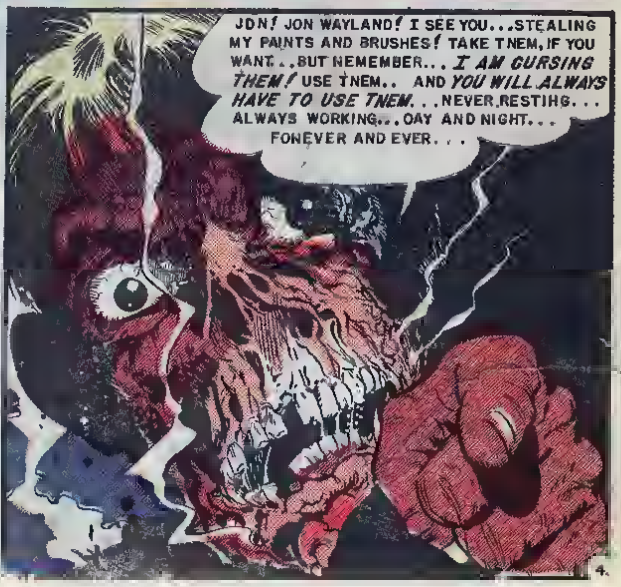

SUDDENLY THE ARMS OF JOHN WAYLAND'S RESTRAINT BURST LIKE A DEMONIAC THING, HE HURLED HIMSELF ON HIS OLD FRIEND!
YOU COULD LOAN ME MONEY TO REDEEM MY PICTURES! YOU HAVE PLENTY OF IT! YOU'D NEVER MISS A MEASLY FIFTEEN DOLLARS! BUT NO...NO NO!
JON, WATCH OUT!

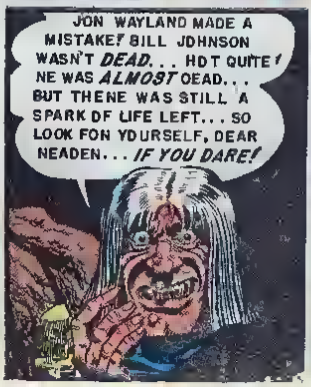

I NEED THAT COVER JOB, YOU HEAR? I NEED IT TO EAT, TO LIVE!


I KNOCKED HIM OUT, BUT I'LL DO MORE THAN THAT! I'M GOING TO KILL HIM! THEN I WON'T HAVE TO REDEEM MY OLD PICTURES! I'LL BE ABLE TO TAKE HIS PAINTS AND BRUSHES...TO PAINT NEW AND BETTER ONES!


JON WAYLAND DRAGGED HIS OLD FRIEND CLOSE TO A BIG VAT OF ETCHING ACID. THEN, LIFTING HIS HEAD, HE PLUNGED IT DOWN TOWARD THE ACID... JUST AS JOHNSON RECOVERED CONSCIOUSNESS...
JOH! STOP! NO...NO... DON'T DO THIS TO ME! JON! AAAAGGGNN!

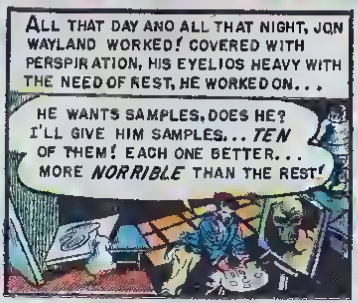

I'LL TAKE PLENTY OF PAINT...AND BRUSHES! EVERYTHING I NEED! THAT FOOL, JOHNSON! WHY DIDN'T HE GIVE ME THE FIFTEEN DOLLARS? HE'D BE ALIVE, NOW!


JON! JON WAYLAND! I SEE YOU...STEALING MY PAINTS AND BRUSHES! TAKE THEM, IF YOU WANT...BUT REMEMBER... I AM CURSING THEM! USE THEM.. AND YOU WILL ALWAYS HAVE TO USE THEM...NEVER RESTING... ALWAYS WORKING...DAY AND NIGHT... FOREVER AND EVER...


JON WAYLAND MADE A MISTAKE! BILL JOHNSON WASN'T DEAD... NOT QUITE! HE WAS ALMOST DEAD... BUT THERE WAS STILL A SPARK OF LIFE LEFT... SO LOOK FOR YOURSELF, DEAR READER... IF YOU DARE!

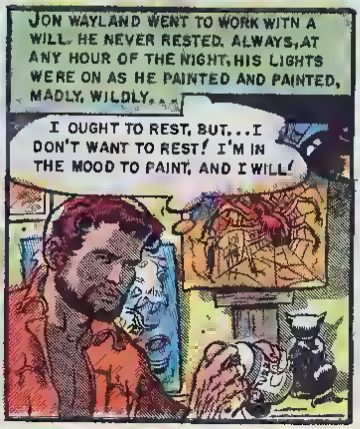

CURSING ME? WHAT A LAUGH! AS IF A DEAD MAN'S CURSE COULD EVER AFFECT A LIVING PERSON! USE YOUR PAINTS? YOU BET YOUR LIFE I'LL USE 'EM! BET YOUR LIFE..? A JOKE! HA! HA!

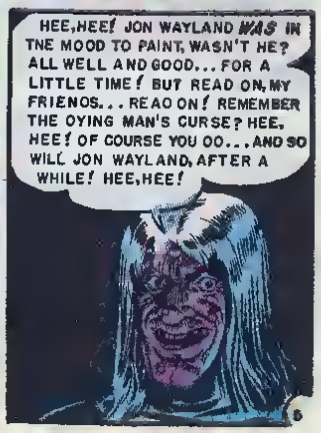

FEVERISHLY, JON WAYLAND THREW HIMSELF INTO A FRENZY OF PAINTING, ANXIOUS TO MAKE UP FOR TIME, HE THREW PAINT ON CANVAS WITH SURE, DEXTEROUS SPEED..
WAIT'LL THE EDITOR SEES THIS PICTURE!


ALL THAT DAY AND ALL THAT NIGHT, JON WAYLAND WORKED! COVERED WITH PERSPIRATION, HIS EYELIDS HEAVY WITH THE NEED OF REST, HE WORKED ON...
HE WANTS SAMPLES, DOES HE? I'LL GIVE HIM SAMPLES... TEN OF THEM! EACH ONE BETTER... MORE HORRIBLE THAN THE REST!


NEXT DAY...
THEY'RE TERRIFIC, WAYLAND! TERRIFIC! YOU'VE CAUGHT THE MOOD EXACTLY! TERROR! HORROR! THE BIG BOSS LIKES 'EM SO YOU'RE IN!


I'M GIVING YOU A LOT OF MONEY FOR EACH COVER! YOU CAN MAKE A FORTUNE, IF OUR BOOK CLICKS! AND IT SURE OUGHT TO...WITH THESE COVERS OF YOURS!
RICH! I'LL GET RICH AT THESE PRICES!


JON WAYLAND WENT TO WORK WITH A WILL. HE NEVER RESTED. ALWAYS, AT ANY HOUR OF THE NIGHT, HIS LIGHTS WERE ON AS HE PAINTED AND PAINTED, MADLY, WILDLY...
I OUGHT TO REST, BUT...I DON'T WANT TO REST! I'M IN THE MOOD TO PAINT, AND I WILL!


HEE, HEE! JON WAYLAND WAS IN THE MOOD TO PAINT, WASN'T HE? ALL WELL AND GOOD... FOR A LITTLE TIME! BUT READ ON, MY FRIENDS... READ ON! REMEMBER THE DYING MAN'S CURSE? HEE, HEE! OF COURSE YOU DO... AND SO WILL JON WAYLAND, AFTER A WHILE! HEE, HEE!

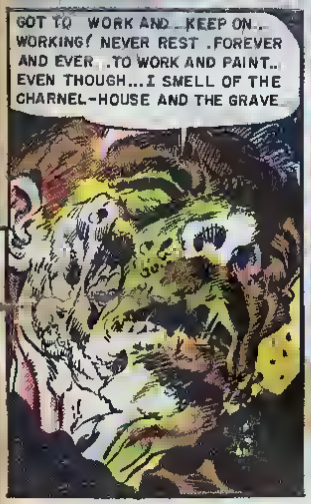

I BROUGHT IN SOME MORE COVER JOBS, JIM. LOOK THEM OVER!
SURE THING, JON. THE MAGAZINE IS SELLING LIKE HOT-CAKES, SO I CAN USE SOME. BUT DON'T GET TOO FAR AHEAD.
BUT JON WAYLAND COULD NOT STOP PAINTING! THE GLISTENING PAINTS OF THE MURDERED ARTIST BECKONED HIM LIKE SOME STRANGE MAGNET.
I CAN'T STOP! I MUST GO ON PAINTING! EVEN IF HE DOESN'T NEED COVERS.
I'VE WORKED FOR THIRTY-THREE HOURS. STEADILY NOT STOPPING EVEN FOR A DRINK...OF WATER! I CAN'T GO ON.. BUT I MUST. FOR I CAN'T STOP
USE MY PAINTS AND YOU WILL ALWAYS HAVE TO USE THEM NEVER RESTING. ALWAYS WORKING FOR-EVER AND EVER!
MERCIFUL HEAVENS! NO NO NO!
JON WAYLAND PAINTED, ALL RIGHT! HE KEPT ON, NIGHT AND DAY! BUT THE MARKET FOR HIS PAINTINGS WAS GONE!
FOR PETE'S SAKE, JON! I'VE BOUGHT A YEAR AHEAD ON YOUR STUFF! I CAN'T POSSIBLY USE ANY MORE! GO TAKE A VACATION! YOU'RE OVER-WORKING!
MONTH AFTER MONTH, DAY AND NIGHT, JON WAYLAND LABORED IN HIS LITTLE GARRET STUDIO, HE DEVELOPED A HACKING COUGH. HIS BODY GREW THIN, WRAITHLIKE. HIS FINGERS, EXHAUSTED WITH BRUSHWORK, TREMBLED AND SHOOK..
ONE DAY HE FELL TO THE FLOOR, AND DID NOT GET UP.
HE'S... DEAD!


THE POOR MAN! HE *WORKED* HIMSELF TO *DEATH*, HE DID! NO REST, NO TIME FOR LAUGHTER OR FUN.. SIGH.. AND NOW— *THE GRAVE WILL SHELTER HIM*..

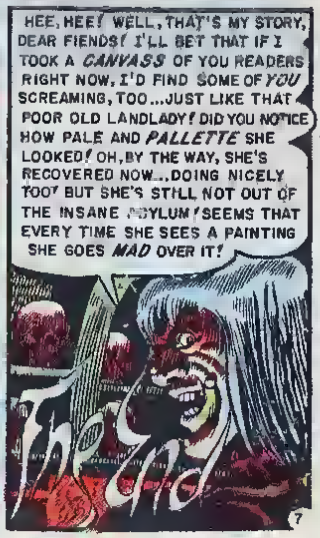

HE MUST HAVE MADE A *LOT OF MONEY*, WITH ALL THAT *WORK* HE DID! LORD KNOWS, HE NEVER *SPENT* ANY OF IT! I WONDER WHERE HE KEPT IT? 'TWON'T DO NO HARM IF I LOOK AROUND


WHAT'S *THAT*? SOUNDS LIKE.. *FOOTSTEPS!* BUT *NOT NATURAL* STEPS! ALMOST LIKE THEY WERE MADE BY *LEG STUMPS!*
THUD
THUD
THUD


I COULD NOT STAY AWAY.. FROM MY WORK! AHH.. THERE ARE MY PAINTS AND BRUSHES... STILL AS GOOD AS EVER—


GOT TO WORK AND.. KEEP ON.. WORKING! NEVER REST.. FOREVER AND EVER.. TO WORK AND PAINT.. EVEN THOUGH... I SMELL OF THE CHARNEL-HOUSE AND THE GRAVE..


AAAGHHHH!
AIEEGHH!
EE


HEE, HEE! WELL, THAT'S MY STORY, DEAR FIENDS! I'LL BET THAT IF I TOOK A *CANVASS* OF YOU READERS RIGHT NOW, I'D FIND SOME OF *YOU* SCREAMING, TOO... JUST LIKE THAT POOR OLD LANDLADY! DID YOU NOTICE HOW PALE AND *PALLETTE* SHE LOOKED! OH, BY THE WAY, SHE'S RECOVERED NOW... DOING NICELY TOO! BUT SHE'S STILL NOT OUT OF THE INSANE ASYLUM! SEEMS THAT EVERY TIME SHE SEES A PAINTING SHE GOES *MAD* OVER IT!
The End



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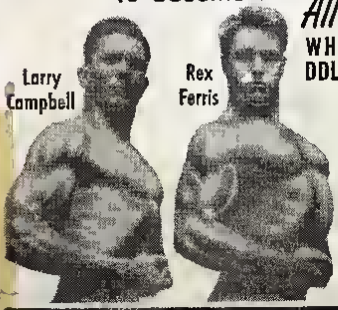
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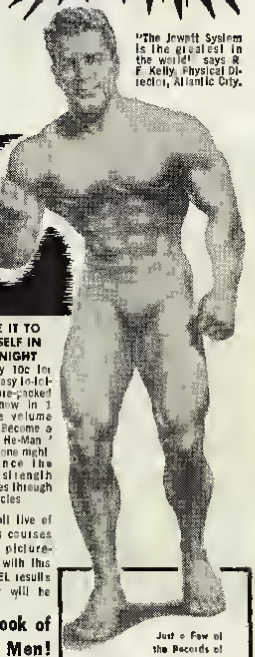
WHICH ONE PAID HUNDREDS OF DOLLARS TO TRAIN AT MY SIDE?

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Rex mailed me a coupon as below. He was a skinny bag of bones. Today he is tops in athletics, strength, business.

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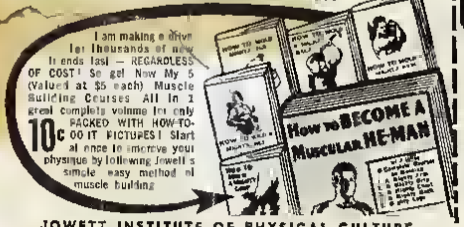


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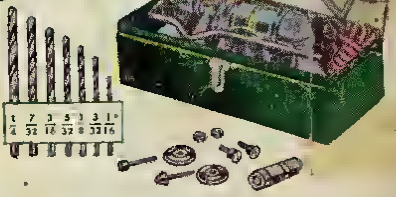
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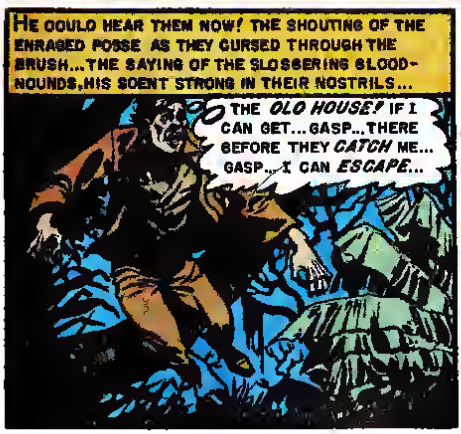


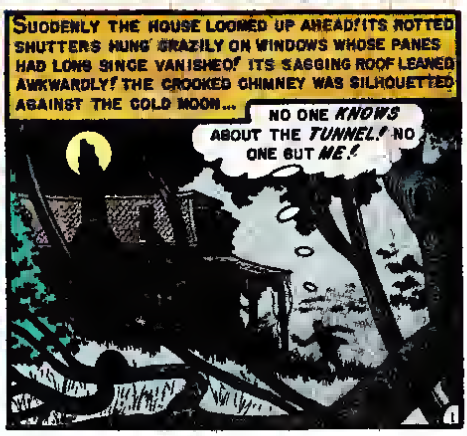



HORROR
THE HAUNT OF FEAR
AN ENTERTAINING COMIC
EC
NO. 5
REPRINT EDITION
FEATURING..
THE OLD WITCH
THE VAULT-KEEPER
THE CRYPT-KEEPER
UGH! WHAT A... MESS! BUT THEY'LL NEVER THINK OF LOOKING FOR A FRESH CORPSE IN THE COFFIN OF A MAN WHO DIED IN 1867!
JOHNNY CRAIG

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!







BRUNO BURST THROUGH THE DECAYED DOOR! THE CRASH OF THE WORM-EATER WOOD ECHOED THROUGH THE EMPTY HOUSE...

THEY'RE GETTING *CLOSER*... BUT I'VE... *I'VE BEATEN THEM!*

HE MADE FOR THE FIREPLACE! IT WAS A HUGE STONE AFFAIR COVERING ALMOST ONE WALL OF THE ROOM...

THE *SECRET ENTRANCE*... THAT I *DISCOVERED*... AS A *BOY*...

THE STEPS WERE THERE, JUST AS HE HAD REMEMBERED THEM! HE STUMBLED DOWN... THE ROTTED WOOD GIVING WAY BENEATH HIS WEIGHT! HE PLUNGED INTO THE BLACKNESS...

YAAAAAAAH!

HE LAY AT THE BOTTOM... IN THE DARKNESS.. PANTING! HIS RIGHT LEG THROBBED WITH PAIN! IT WAS BROKEN! ABOVE... THE THUMPING OF BOOTED FEET TOLD HIM THEY WERE IN THE HOUSE...

THEY'LL *NEVER* FIND THE ENTRANCE TO THIS TUNNEL! IT'S MY *SECRET*, ALL *MINE*! *OOH!* MY LEG..

UPSTAIRS, HE COULD HEAR THE MUFFLED VOICES.. THE CONFUSION... THE YELPING OF THE HOUNDS... AS THEY SEARCHED THE HOUSE! BEFORE HIM, THE TUNNEL STRETCHED OUT INTO THE GLOOM...

GOT TO GET MOVIN'! GOT TO GET TO THE OTHER END... TO THE RIVER! WHAT'S *THIS*? *A SHOVEL!* GOOD! I'LL TAKE IT *WITH* ME... IN *CASE*...

THE TUNNEL BRUNO WAS IN WAS OLD! IT HAD BEEN USED AS AN ESCAPE FROM THE HOUSE DURING THE CIVIL WAR... PART OF THE WELL KNOWN "UNDERGROUND RAILWAY"! HE DRAGGED HIMSELF FORWARD...

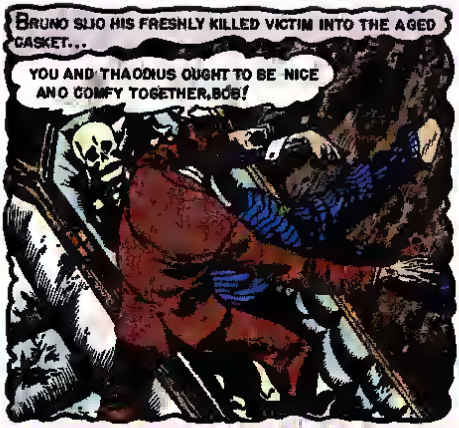
I WONDER... HOW MANY OTHERS LIKE ME... USED THIS TUNNEL TO ESCAPE FROM THE AUTHORITIES...

AS BRUNO CREPT THROUGH THE BLACK, THOUGHTS FLASHED THROUGH HIS BRAIN! THOUGHTS OF WHY HE WAS THERE! OF HOW IT HAD ALL STARTED! HE REMEMBERED IT ALL SO WELL! FIVE MONTHS AGO... THAT NIGHT AT ELLEN'S HOUSE...

BUT, ELLEN! YOU *MUST* DECIDE BETWEEN US! WE *BOTH* WANT TO *MARRY YOU!* YOU'VE GOT TO PICK *ONE*...

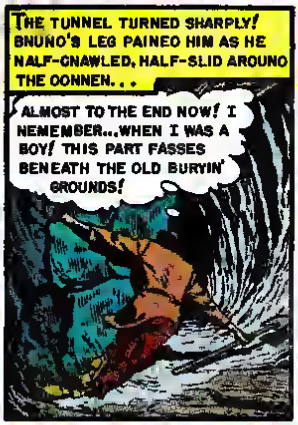
I'M SORRY, BOB! YOU'RE *BOTH* SWEET... *YOU* AND *BRUNO!* I... I *CAN'T* DECIDE!


YES! SRUNO REMENBERED! THERE IN THE DARKRESS OF THE TUNNEL HE REMEMSERED HIS DEDISIDH'HE HAD DEDIDED TO MAKE UP ELLER'S MIND! SETTLE IT...DNDE ARD FDR ALL...
HE'S DOMING...HDW! HE'LL REVER KRDW WHAT HIT HIM...
AS BOB HAD PASSED THE SPOT WHERE HE HAD HID, BRUNO HAD HURLED HIMSELF UPON HIM...
AGAIR ARD AGAIR THE LEAD PIPE HAD DOME DOWN...
...UNTIL BOB HAD MOVED NO MORE.
NOW TO DISPOSE OF THE SODY! SDME PLACE WHERE THEY'LL NEVER FIND IT!
BRUHD HAD LIFTED HIS DEAD RIVAL DNTD HIS SHOULDERS! A PLAH HAD FORMED IH HIS MIRD! HE DARRIED THE SODY TO THE DIVIL WAR BURIAL BROUNDS...
RD DHE GETS BURIED HERE AHY MORE! THEY USE THE NEW GEMETERY NEARER TO TOWN...
HE HAD LEFT THE BODY AND SEARCHED A REIGHSORING FARM! AFTER HAVING FOUND WHAT HE WAS LOOKING FOR, HE HAD RETURNED WITH THE SHOVEL! THEN HE SEGAR TO DIS...
THE GRAVE MARKER SAYS 'THADDIUS GDDKIN...DIED 1867!' THERE SHOULDN'T BE MUCH LEFT DF HIM...
SOON A HOLLOW THUD TOLD BRUNO HE HAD STRUCK OLD THADDIUS GDDKIN'S COFFIN! HE LIFTED THE ROTTED LID...
NOTHING BUT BONES AND SHREDS OF CLOTHING! THIS WILL DO FINE...
9


BRUNO SLID HIS FRESHLY KILLED VICTIM INTO THE AGED CASKET...
YOU AND THAODIUS OUGHT TO BE NICE AND COMFY TOGETHER, BOB!

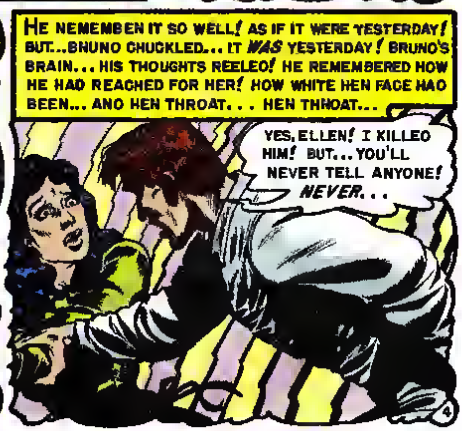

OF COURSE THEY NEVER FOUND HIM! BRUNO LAUGHED TO HIMSELF AS HE MOVED THROUGH THE TUNNEL...
WHO'D HAVE THOUGHT TO LOOK IN THE GRAVE OF A MAN BURIED IN *1867?*


THEN BRUNO THOUGHT OF ELLEN OF WHAT HE TOLD HER AFTER BOB "DISAPPEARED"...
HE'S PROBABLY RUN OFF, ELLEN! MAYBE TO THE BIG CITY! THIS OUGHT TO SHOW YOU WHO LOVES YOU *MOST!*
I SUPPOSE YOU'RE RIGHT, BRUNO!


THE TUNNEL TURNED SHARPLY! BRUNO'S LEG PAINED HIM AS HE HALF-CRAWLED, HALF-SLID AROUND THE CORNER...
ALMOST TO THE END NOW! I REMEMBER...WHEN I WAS A BOY! THIS PART PASSES BENEATH THE OLD BURYIN' GROUNDS!

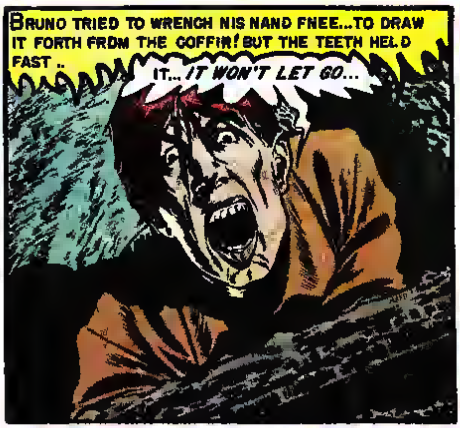

...AND ELLEN! HE HAD MARRIED HER SOON AFTER! HE HAD BEEN HAPPY...SO HAPPY...UNTIL...THAT MORNING...
ELLEN! WHY ARE YOU *LOOKING* AT ME LIKE *THAT?*
YOU...*YOU TALKED IN YOUR SLEEP!*

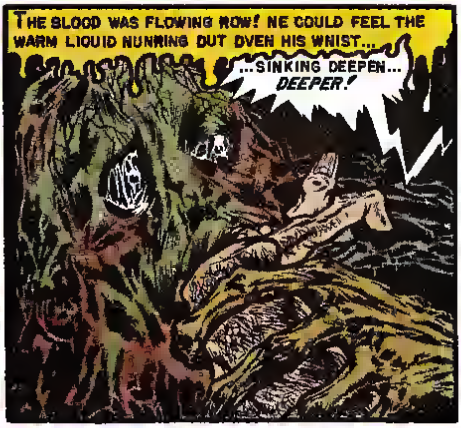

FEAR HAD STOLEN INTO BRUNO'S HEART! IT HAD CRAWLED UP HIS SPINE LIKE A SLIVER OF ICE...HAD POUNDED IN HIS BRAIN...
WHAT DID I *SAY,* ELLEN?
YOU *MURDERED* HIM, DIDN'T YOU? *YOU MURDERED BOB!*


HE REMEMBERED IT SO WELL! AS IF IT WERE YESTERDAY! BUT...BRUNO CHUCKLED... IT *WAS* YESTERDAY! BRUNO'S BRAIN... HIS THOUGHTS REELED! HE REMEMBERED HOW HE HAD REACHED FOR HER! HOW WHITE HER FACE HAD BEEN... AND HER THROAT... HER THROAT...
YES, ELLEN! I KILLED HIM! BUT...YOU'LL NEVER TELL ANYONE! *NEVER...*


YES, HER THROAT! HER SOFT WHITE THROAT! HOW EASILY HE HAD SLIPPED HIS FINGERS ABOUT IT! HOW SIMPLE IT HAD BEEN TO CLOSE THEM...TIGHTER... TIGHTER...UNTIL...
SHE... SHE'S DEAD!
AND MRS. LANE! PRYING, SPYING MRS. LANE! SHE HAD BEEN WATCHING FROM HER WINDOW! SHE SCREAMED! HE COULDN'T STAND SCREAMING! BRUNO RUSHED FROM HIS HOUSE...SNATCHING THE BREAD KNIFE FROM THE TABLE...
YOU MUSTN'T TELL EITHER, MRS. LANE! YOU'LL HAVE TO DIE, TOO!
YES! IT HAD BEEN YESTERDAY! HE WAS SURE OF IT NOW! MR. LANE HAD SEEN HIM...STANDING OVER MRS. LANE...AND THE KNIFE...WET...STICKY...RED...
HE KILLED HER! GOOD LORD, YOU'VE GOT TO STOP HIM! HE'S MAD! MAD!
THEN...THE POSSE! THEY CHASED HIM! HE HAD HIDDEN IN THE WOODS...BUT THE BLOODHOUNDS FOUND HIS SCENT! AND THEN HE HAD THOUGHT OF IT! THE HOUSE...THE DESERTED OLD HOUSE WITH THE TUNNEL HE HAD FOUND...AS A BOY...
IF...I CAN GET THERE BEFORE THEY CATCH ME...I CAN ESCAPE...THROUGH THE TUNNEL...
AND NOW HE WAS THERE! SOON HE WOULD BE AT THE END...OUT AT THE RIVER ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BURIAL GROUNDS...
THE BLOODHOUNDS! THEY WON'T BE ABLE TO FOLLOW MY SCENT THROUGH THE WATER! I'LL WADE DOWNSTREAM! I'LL GET AWAY!
SUDDENLY, BRUNO CAME TO A STOP! THE TUNNEL! THE TUNNEL ENDED...
MUST HAVE CAVED IN! THE HEAVY RAINS...THE RIVER OVERFLOWED TWO YEARS AGO...
3

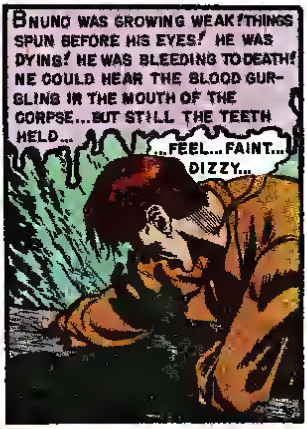

GOT TO DIG MYSELF THROUGH THE REST OF THE WAY! LUCKY I BROUGHT THE SHOVEL...
BRUNO BENT TO THE TASK OF CLEARING HIS WAY THROUGH THE CAVED-IN PART OF THE TUNNEL! HE LAUGHED TO HIMSELF...
I'LL BET THE POSSE'S LOOKIN' FOR ME BACK AT THE HOUSE...
THE SPADE SANK INTO THE SOFT EARTH AHEAD! THERE WASN'T MUCH ROOM TO MOVE AROUND...
I'LL HAVE TO SWITCH THE DIRT FROM UP AHEAD...TO BEHIND ME...
THEN THE SHOVEL STHUCK IT! IT SPLINTERED UNDER THE BLOW! BRUNO LIT A MATCH AND PEERED AT WHAT HE HAD FOUND...
WOOD... BRASS HANDLES...STUDS! IT... IT'S A COFFIN!
AT FIRST HE WAS SHOCKED...BUT THEN HE REMEMBERED! THIS PART OF THE TUNNEL DID PASS UNDER THE BURYING GROUNDS...
GOT TO GET IT OUT OF THE WAY... GOT TO GET BY IT...
THE ROTTED AND DECAYED WOOD GAVE WAY AS BRUNO PUSHED! HIS ARM SHOT FORWARD INTO THE HOLE...
WHAT THE...?
FEELS LIKE... LIKE... A HEAD!
THE STENCH REACHED HIS NOSTRILS! FUNNY! SUCH AN OLD COFFIN WITH A BODY NOT YET FULLY DECOMPOSED? HIS HAND TRAVELED OVER THE FEATURES! THEY WERE PULPY AND SOFT! THEN THE TEETH CLOSED DOWN...
IT... IT'S GOT MY HAND! IT'S BITING ME!
6


BRUNO TRIED TO WRENCH NIS NAND FNEE...TO DRAW IT FORTH FROM THE COFFIN! BUT THE TEETH HEL D FAST ..
IT... IT WON'T LET GO...


THE BLOOD WAS FLOWING NOW! NE COULD FEEL THE WARM LIQUID NUNNING DUT OVEN HIS WNIST...
...SINKING DEEPEN... DEEPER!


HE WAS SCREAMING! NO ONE WOULD NEAR HIM! HE KNEW THAT! BUT HE SCREAMED ANYWAY! THE PAIN... WAS UNBEARABLE...
YAAAAAAAAAAH!


UP ABOVE...TNE POSSE WAS SEARCHING THE BUNIAL GROUNDS! THE SCREAMING DNIFTED UP... TNNDUGH THE BLACK EANTH...
D'YA HEAR THAT, JED?
SOUNDED LIKE A SCREAM!


BNUNO WAS GROWING WEAK! THINGS SPUN BEFORE HIS EYES! HE WAS DYING! HE WAS BLEEDING TO DEATH! NE COULD HEAR THE BLOOD GUR-GLING IN THE MOUTH OF THE CORPSE...BUT STILL THE TEETH HELD...
...FEEL... FAINT... DIZZY...


SDDN ALL WAS SILENT! BRUNO WAS DEAD! THE CORPSE RELAXED ITS BRIP! BRUND'S GLAZED EYES STARED AT THE TARNISHED NAMEPLATE ON THE ROTTED COFFIN! IT READ,' THADDIUS GODKIN... DIED 1867'!
THADDIUS GODKIN DIED 1867


NEE, NEE! AND THAT'S MY TALE, DEAR NEADERS! AND A TASTY MORSEL IF I SAY SO MYSELF! A STORY YOU COULD SINK YOUR TEETH INTO! I HOPE THE SHARP CLIMAX DIDN'T SHOCK YOU! ESPECIALLY THE BITING IRONY OF IT! BOB CERTAINLY GOT HIS LAST LICK, DIDN'T HE! YOU SAID A MOUTHFUL!
THE END

THE CRYPT OF TERROR



THE OWNEN OF THE FNEAK CONCESSION WAS A FAT-FACED CNARACTEN NAMED LOOEY GLANTZ! DUT FNONT... HE WAS A GNEAT SHOWMAN...

FOR TWENTY-FIVE OENTS... A FOURTN PART OP A DOLLAN.. YOU'LL SEE TNE BNEATEST OOLLECTION OP FNEAKS TO EVEN...

...BUT BACKSTAGE, NE WAS A *RAT!* NIS FNEAKS DESPISED HIM! HE TNEATED THEM LIKE OIRT! TNENE WAS *FANNY*, THE FAT LADY...

YEAN! YOU NEAND ME! *SMILE* AT THE PEOPLE, YOU OVERGNOWN COW! DDN'T JUST *SIT* TNENE... *EARN* YDUN KEEP!

...AND *XETAL*, TNE INDIAN NUSBEN MAN...

WNAT'S TNE MATTEN, XETAL? ODN'T YOU LIKE YOUN JOS? I WATCHED YOUR ACT! STRETCH IT... STRETCH IT *MORE*...

OOOOWW!

...AND TNE POON PATNETIC CASE THEY CALLED *OORPUS*, TNE ARMLESS AND LEGLESS BOY! NE HAD BEEN BORN WITNOUT LIMSS AND WAS QUITE NELPLESS! BLANTZ WAS *PARTIOULARLY MEAN* TO CORPUS...

FANNY! DDN'T FEED NIM! LET NIM EAT NIMSELF! PUT TNE PLATE DOWN IN FRONT OF NIM...

BUT, MN. BLANTZ! HE

CORPUS WAS FONCED TO EAT LIKE A DOG... AND GLANTZ ROARED WITN SADISTIC DELIGNT...

HAW... HAW... CORPUS! IF YOU HAD WNISKERS... HAW.. HAW... I COULD CALL YOU *FIDO*...

CHOMP CHOMP

GLANTZ NEVER LOST A SINGLE OPPORTUNITY TO INFLICT SEVERE MENTAL AND PHYSICAL TORTURE UPON HIS POOR FREAKS! NIS PERVERTED SENSE OF HUMOR KEPT HIM WELL SUPPLIED WITH INGENIOUS METHODS...

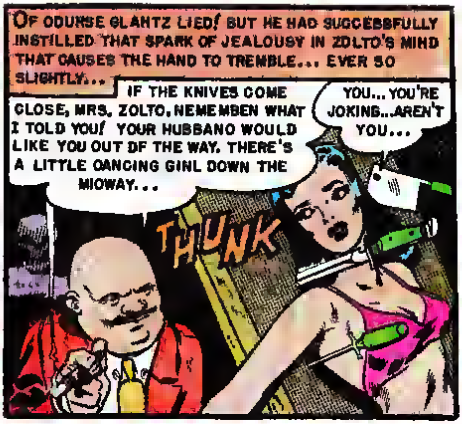
ZOLTO! I WANT TO TALK TO YOU!

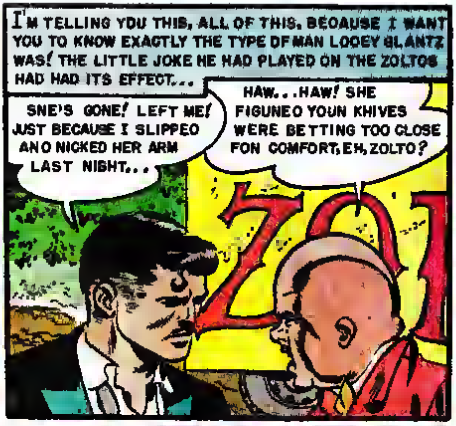
WHAT IS IT MR. BLANTZ?

ZOLTO WAS THE SHARP-EYED KNIFE THROWER! HIS ACT CONSISTED OF THROWING KNIVES, ICE-PICKS, CLEAVERS AND THE LIKE AT HIS WIFE WHO STOOD SPREAD-EAGLED ABOUT TWENTY FEET AWAY...

I JUST THOUGHT YOU OUGHT TO KNOW! YOUR WIFE'S BEEN TWO-TIMING YOU! SHE'S RUNNIN' AROUND WITH A CONCESSION OWNER..

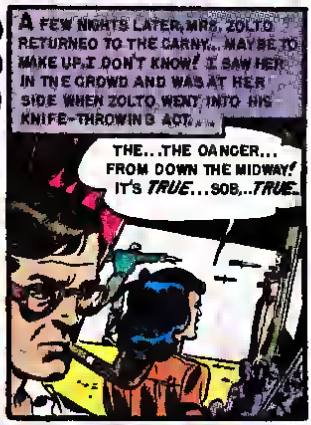
YOU'RE LYING! IT ISN'T TRUE!


OF ODUNSE GLANTZ LIED! BUT HE HAD SUCCESSFULLY INSTILLED THAT SPARK OF JEALOUSY IN ZOLTO'S MIND THAT CAUSES THE HAND TO TREMBLE... EVER SO SLIGHTLY...
IF THE KNIVES COME CLOSE, MRS. ZOLTO, REMEMBEN WHAT I TOLD YOU! YOUR HUSBAND WOULD LIKE YOU OUT OF THE WAY. THERE'S A LITTLE DANCING GIRL DOWN THE MIDWAY...
YOU... YOU'RE JOKING...AREN'T YOU...
THUNK


I'M TELLING YOU THIS, ALL OF THIS, BECAUSE I WANT YOU TO KNOW EXACTLY THE TYPE OF MAN LOOEY GLANTZ WAS! THE LITTLE JOKE HE HAD PLAYED ON THE ZOLTOS HAD HAD ITS EFFECT...
SHE'S GONE! LEFT ME! JUST BECAUSE I SLIPPED AND NICKED HER ARM LAST NIGHT...
HAW...HAW! SHE FIGURED YOUR KNIVES WERE BETTING TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT, EH, ZOLTO?
ZOT


IT'S YOUR FAULT, GLANTZ! YOU DID IT! YOU SPOKE ME UP WITH THOSE LIES ABOUT HER...
WATCH YOURSELF, ZOLTO, OR YOU'LL BE LOOKING FOR A NEW CARNY! REMEMBER, YOU'RE NOT A YOUNG MAN...


...SOB...
...SOB...
OON'T WONNY ZOLTO! I KNOW WHENE YOU CAN FIND A NEW PARTNER FOR YOUR ACT! THERE'S A LITTLE DANCING GIRL... DOWN THE MIDWAY...


A FEW NIGHTS LATER, MRS. ZOLTO RETURNED TO THE CARNY... MAYBE TO MAKE UP. I DON'T KNOW! I SAW HER IN THE CROWD AND WAS AT HER SIDE WHEN ZOLTO WENT INTO HIS KNIFE-THROWING ACT...
THE...THE DANCER... FROM DOWN THE MIDWAY! IT'S TRUE...SOB...TRUE.

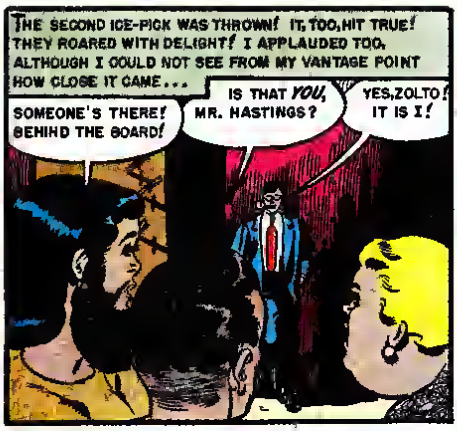

SHE LEFT THE GROUNDS CRYING! THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO! GLANTZ'S LITTLE JOKE HAD BEEN CARRIED TO ITS EXTREME! SHE NEVER CAME BACK! EVEN I BEGAN TO DISLIKE THE EVIL FREAK-SHOW OWNER! ONE EVENING...
IT WAS GOOD OF YOU TO INVITE ME TO YOUR CHOW TABLE, ZOLTO!
IT WAS GOOD OF YOU TO COME, MR. HASTINGS!
FANNY!


HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU NOT TO FEED CONPUS! LET HIM FEED HIMSELF!
YES, MR. GLANTZ! I... I'M SORRY, CONPUS!
THAT'S ALL RIGHT, FANNY!


I WAS HORRIFIED TO SEE SUCH INHUMANITY! BUT...WHEN GLANTZ GOT UP AND...
FEED YOURSELF, CORPUS! LIKE... THIS...
GLUG-GH-H!
IT WAS DISGUSTING! GLANTZ HAD PUSHED THAT POOR HELPLESS BOY'S FACE IRTO HIS PLATE! I STARTED TO OBJECT BUT ZOLTO ACTED SOORER...
LEAVE HIM ALONE, BLARTZ!
PUT DOWN THAT KRIFE, ZOLTO!
SNAP!
DON'T YOU EVER TORMENT THAT BOY AGAIN, GLANTZ, OR I WILL PUT DOWR THIS KRIFE---RIGHT THROUGH YOUR UGLY SKULL...
I WAS DUMBSTRUCK WITH HORROR...POWERLESS TO MOVE AS I WATCHED THE ERSUING SCENE! GLANTZ WAS INFURIATED! HE RAD BEEN MADE A FOOL OF IN FRONT OF THE TROUPE! HE RUSHED TO A DORNER OF TNE TENT...
TNREATER ME WITN A KNIFE... WILL YOU?
IT WAS ALL OVER BEFORE I COULD DO AHTTRING! GLARTZ SCOOPED UP TWO IRONS THAT THE FIRE-EATER RAD BEER HEATIRG FOR THE EVERING PERFORMARCE! THEY WERE WHITE HOT! HE RUSHED AT TRE PARALYZED ZOLTO...
I'LL TEACH YOU!
SSSSS
WE SAT TNERE...THE FREAKS AND I... AS GLANTZ RAMMED THE WHITE-ROT IRONS INTO ZOLTO'S EYES! HIS SHRIEK OF AGONIZING PAIN ECHOED UP AND DOWN THE DESERTED MIDWAY...
TOU FOOL! YOU'VE BLIRDED RIM!
RE... HE HAD IT GOMING!
NYAAAA
ZOLTO LAT OR THE GROURD... HIS FACE OUPPED IR HIS ARMS! HE WAS SCREAMING IN AGONY! TRE SMELL OF SURRED FLESH WAS ABOUT US! I FELT A WAVE OF RAUSEA COME OVER ME! AS I LEFT THE TENT FOR A BREATH OF FRESH AIR, I HEARD BLARTZ'S HYSTERICAL VOICE...
GET OUT! GET! YOU'RE THROUGH! YOU CAN'T DO YOUR ACT NOW... BLIND! BET OUT AND DON'T COME BACK!

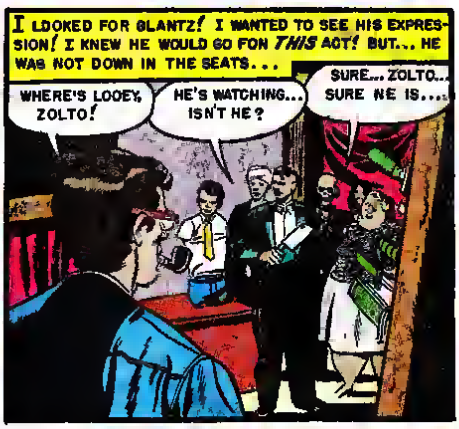

I THOUGHT OF CALLIHG THE PDLICE, BUT I KHEW THAT IT WDULO OO ND GDDD! GLANTZ HAO AGTED IN SELF-DEFEHSE! AHD HE HAD THE FHEAKS SO TEN-RONIZED, THEY WOULO BE AFHAID TO TESTIFY TO THE CONTRANY! A FEW WEEKS LATEN...
ZDLTD * WHAT ARE YOU OOIHG HIOIHG IN HERE!
WHO... MN... HASTINGS?
YES, ZDLTO! IT IS I! WHY ANE YDU HIDING?
IT'S FANHY AHO GDNPUS AHD XETAL AND THE REST! THEY'NE TAKING GANE DF ME TILL MY EYES HEAL...
THAT'S GOOD OF THEM ZOLTO!
YES! THEY BRING ME FOOD... AND THEY HIDE ME FROM MR. GLANTZ!
BUT... YOU GAN'T GO ON LIKE THIS FOREVER, ZOLTO!
OH, NO! WE'RE WORKING ON THAT...
WONKIHG ON WHAT?
AN AOT! THEY'RE TEAOHING ME! IT'S EASY... EASIEN THAN I THDUGHT!
TEACHING YOU AN AOT?
YES! THNOWING KNIYES AGAIH! IT'S EASY! THEY JUST FACE ME TOWARD THE BOAND... AHD I THY TO VISUALIZE MY PANTNEN...
PANTHEN?
DH, OF COURSE WE'NE DNLY USING A DUMMY! WHEH I GET REALLY GOOO, THEN... MAYBE...
5.

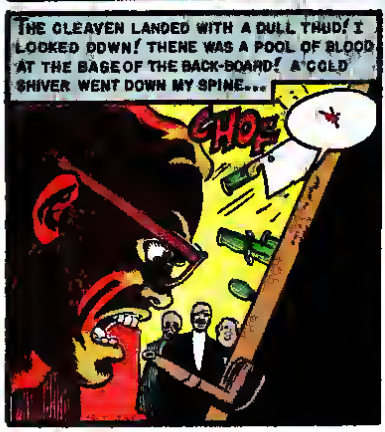

ZOLTO WAS LIKE A LITTLE BOY AGAIN! HE BUBBLED AND CHATTERED ABOUT HIS NEW ACT AND HOW GOOD IT WOULD BE! I FELT SO SORRY FOR HIM...
READY TO SHOW IT TO HIM, OF COURSE! THEN... MAYBE HE'LL FORGIVE ME... AND TAKE ME BACK!
YES, ZOLTO! MAYBE HE... WILL... FORGIVE YOU!
I FELT AS IF I WANTED TO CRY! THE FREAKS HAD DONE WONDERS WITH ZOLTO! HE DONE NO MALICE! AND HE HAD SUCH CONFIDENCE IN HIMSELF...
SO YOU WON'T TELL MR. GLANTZ ABOUT IT, WILL YOU, MR. HASTINGS? AT LEAST NOT UNTIL I'M READY!
READY FOR WHAT?
I... I WONDER IF IT COULD BE POSSIBLE... IF HE REALLY COULD GO ON AGAIN... THROWING KNIVES... BLIND!
AND THEN... ONE RIGHT ABOUT A MONTH LATER... ZOLTO STUMBLED INTO MY OFFICE...
TONIGHT, MR. HASTINGS! I'M GOING TO PERFORM TONIGHT! FANNY TOLD ME MR. GLANTZ WOULD SEE MY ACT TONIGHT!
I'LL BE THERE, ZOLTO! I WOULDN'T MISS IT FOR ANYTHING!
AND I MEANT IT! THAT NIGHT I MADE MY WAY TO THE FREAK TENT! I GUESS THE AUDITION HAD ALREADY STARTED, FOR I HEARD LAUGHTER AND APPLAUSE AS I ENTERED...
BRAVO, ZOLTO!
GOOD SHOT!
A LITTLE HIGHER THIS TIME...
I WATCHED FASCINATED! I HAD COME IN BEHIND THE BACKBOARD SO THAT I COULD SEE THEIR FACES! THEY WERE SMILING! IT HAD BEEN SO LONG SINCE I HAD SEEN ANY OF THEM SMILE...
NOW, AN ICE-PICK, ZOLTO! TO THE LEFT THIS TIME... JUST ABOUT AN INCH...
ZOLTO THREW THE ICE PICK! IT MADE A DULL SOUND AS IT HIT! ZOLTO WAS SMILING TOO, ALTHOUGH IT WAS A BLANK SMILE! A FACE WITHOUT EYES LACKS SO MUCH EXPRESSION...
GOOD, ZOLTO! HAH, HAH! GOOD!
ANOTHER ZOLTO! ANOTHER... THIS TIME HIGHER...
...AND TO THE RIGHT...

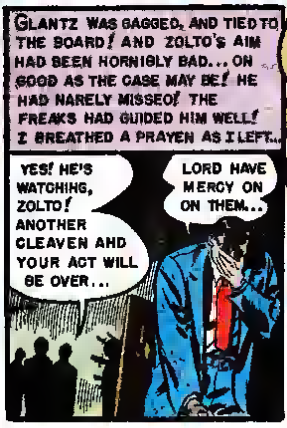

THE SECOND ICE-PICK WAS THROWN! IT, TOO, HIT TRUE! THEY ROARED WITH DELIGHT! I APPLAUDED TOO, ALTHOUGH I COULD NOT SEE FROM MY VANTAGE POINT HOW CLOSE IT CAME...
SOMEONE'S THERE! BEHIND THE BOARD!
IS THAT YOU, MR. HASTINGS?
YES, ZOLTO! IT IS I!


I'M SHOWING MR. GLANTZ MY ACT! CAN YOU SEE WELL?
WELL ENOUGH, ZOLTO! GO AHEAD!


I DID NOT WANT TO MOVE! I HAD NOT SEEN SUCH HAPPINESS AMONG THE FREAKS FOR SO LONG THAT I WANTED TO STAY WHERE I COULD SEE THEIR FACES... NOT THE BOARD...
NOW A CLEAVER, ZOLTO...A CLEAVER...
DOWN A LITTLE THIS TIME...
AND OVER TO THE RIGHT AN INCH...


I LOOKED FOR GLANTZ! I WANTED TO SEE HIS EXPRESSION! I KNEW HE WOULD GO FOR THIS ACT! BUT... HE WAS NOT DOWN IN THE SEATS...
WHERE'S LOOEY, ZOLTO!
HE'S WATCHING... ISN'T HE?
SURE... ZOLTO... SURE HE IS...


THE CLEAVEN LANDED WITH A DULL THUD! I LOOKED DOWN! THENE WAS A POOL OF BLOOD AT THE BASE OF THE BACK-BOARD! A COLD SHIVER WENT DOWN MY SPINE...
CHOP


GLANTZ WAS GAGGED, AND TIED TO THE BOARD! AND ZOLTO'S AIM HAD BEEN HORRIBLY BAD... OR GOOD AS THE CASE MAY BE! HE HAD NARELY MISSED! THE FREAKS HAD GUIDED HIM WELL! I BREATHED A PRAYEN AS I LEFT...
YES! HE'S WATCHING, ZOLTO! ANOTHER CLEAVEN AND YOUR ACT WILL BE OVER...
LORD HAVE MERCY ON ON THEM...


HEH,HEH! AND THAT'S HENRY HASTINGS' STORY! STRIKING TALE, EH? PIERCING FINISH? WELL, OLD LOOEY CERTAINLY HAD IT COMING... AND IT CAME! ICE-PICKS... KNIVES... CLEAVENS! OH, THAT LAST CLEAVEN WAS THE TOPPER... HEH,HEH... GET IT? AFTER THAT, GLANTZ LOST HIS HEAD! WELL, SEE YOU IN MY OWN MAGAZINE, TALES FROM THE CRYPT! UNTIL THEN... DON'T LISTEN TO OLD KNIVE'S TALES!



It was obvious that he was a goner and would be dead within five minutes. His coat and shirt were slashed brutally and blood came pouring out of him in torrents. His eyes were wide and glassy, his mouth moved instinctively but the only sounds which came to his greyish lips were gurgled and incoherent. And then suddenly his body stopped quivering for a moment and he looked up with a glint of recognition at the Police officers surrounding him.

"Out at Fairview..." he whispered, and the Police Stenographer pressed closer, notebook ready. "F-Fairview ... the cemetery," continued the man with the knife slashes draining his lifeblood away. "The headstone ... it's marked ... P-Paul Kleeg ..."

The Homicide Captain leaned over the dying man. "Who are you ... how did you get to Police Headquarters? Who stabbed you ... where are they?"

The man's mouth moved convulsively and his words were barely audible. "M-My name ... *Weldon*. T-Two days ago ... got out of State Prison. Came here to see Kleeg's grave ... open it ... make sure he *was* dead like papers said. Kleeg was in on bank job with me ten years ago ... *I* was grabbed ... he got away. Then I heard he died ... eight years ago ... came to make sure!"

A bubble of blood burst on the man's lips and a shudder passed down his body, but after a moment he continued: "Opened his grave ... c-case all rotten and full of weeds ... only a skeleton left there ... grinning as if Kleeg was laughing at me! I bent over skeleton ... to see if he was buried with ring or any other jewelry I could use ... when his hand reached out and grabbed me! I-I couldn't move ... then he stabbed me with some kind of blade he had ... some kind of knife ..."

The man's head fell back and a last tortured gasp escaped him. He was dead. The Captain gave his orders in a hushed voice: "Have the Morgue pick 'im up right away! Name's *Weldon*, eh? Must be the one listed among this month's releases from upriver. Come on ... we'll saunter over to Kleeg's grave out at Fairview! Craziest story I ever heard ... imagine, a skeleton stabbing a man to death!

The circle of Police stared into the opened grave. The Captain spoke first, as he moved down to it, past the cemetery workmen who had shovelled away the dirt that covered it. "A skeleton ... just like Weldon described it. And it looks as if it *has* been dug up very recently ..."

"Craziest story *any* of us ever heard!" a Sergeant said aloud. "What probably happened is that Weldon went off his rocker and stabbed *himself!* Who ever heard of a skeleton...?"

At that moment the Captain looked up from the decayed coffin, his face chalk-white. "His story *is* crazy," he said, "and only an insane man would believe it! But just look at THIS!"

The officers craned forward. There, grasped in the fleshless hand of Paul Kleeg's skeleton, was a blade several inches long. Rusted so completely that it had almost merged with the long tapering bones which clutched it! And covering the entire length of that corroded blade was a sticky dark brown substance. Blood, just beginning to dry!



YOU PEER THROUGH THE BLINDING DOWNPOUR AT THE SIGN! THE HEADLIGHTS OF YOUR CAR REFLECT ON THE WATER-SOAKED WOOD! YOU CAN BARELY MAKE OUT THE FADED LETTERS! THEY READ...

'END-OF-THE-ROAD INN'! THANK GOODNESS! I COULDN'T GO ON MUCH FURTHER IN THIS STORM!

END OF THE ROAD INN

YOU TURN INTO THE TREE-LINED ROAD! UP AHEAD, YOU CAN SEE THE LIGHTS OF THE INN SHINING THROUGH THE HEAVY RAIN! YOU PULL UP TO THE DOOR...

I HOPE THERE'S A ROOM AVAILABLE!

IN ANSWER TO YOUR FEVERISH KNOCKING, THE DOOR IS OPENED BY A LARGE UGLY-FEATURED MAN...

YES?

I...I WAS CAUGHT IN THE STORM! I WAS WONDERING IF I COULD FIND LODGING HERE... FOR TONIGHT!

HIS BEADY EYES FOLLOW YOU AS HE STEPS ASIDE AND YOU ENTER THE GLOOMY INTERIOR...

IS THERE A ROOM FOR ME?

I THINK I HAVE ONE VACANT!

YOU STUDY YOUR HOST! HE IS TALL, ALMOST OVERSIZED! HE STEPS BEHIND THE DESK AND PUSHES A BATTERED BOOK...ITS PAGES YELLOWED WITH AGE...FORWARD...

IF YOU'LL SIGN THE REGISTER...

OF COURSE!

THEN THE INNKEEPER TAKES A KEY AND LEADS YOU UPSTAIRS TO YOUR ROOM! AS HE OPENS THE DOOR, THE *MUSTY ODOR* OF *FOUL AIR* SEARS YOUR NOSTRILS...

IF YOU NEED ANYTHING, JUST LET ME KNOW!

THANK YOU! I WILL!

HE LEAVES! YOU LISTEN AS HIS HEAVY FOOTSTEPS DESCEND DARK STAIRS AND FADE OUT OF EARSHOT! YOU LOOK ABOUT YOU! THE ROOM IS SPARSELY FURNISHED! A THICK LAYER OF DUST COVERS EVERYTHING!

WELL! I GUESS I'LL TURN IN! DRIVING THROUGH THE RAIN HAS TIRED ME!

THE ROOM IS *COLD* AND *DANK*! YOU SEARCH THE CLOSET FOR A BLANKET! THERE IS NONE! THE SINGLE THIN BED SPREAD WILL NOT BE ENOUGH! YOU LOOK FOR THE HOUSE PHONE...

BLAST IT! GUESS I'LL HAVE TO GO *DOWNSTAIRS* AND ASK HIM FOR A BLANKET!

YOU OPEN THE DOOR OF YOUR ROOM AND LOOK OUT! THE HALL IS DARK AND DESERTED! YOU GO DOWNSTAIRS! THE LIGHT FROM THE FIREPLACE CASTS DANCING SHADOWS THROUGH THE LOBBY! THERE IS AN EERIE STRANGENESS ABOUT IT! AND THE INNKEEPER IS NOWHERE TO BE SEEN...

H-M-M-M! GUESS I'LL HAVE TO *WAIT* UNTIL HE COMES BACK FROM WHEREVER HE IS! THIS *CHAIR* LOOKS *INVITING*...


YOU SIT DOWN! THE WNNMTH OF THE DNNGKLING FINE FEELS GOOO! YOU GNZE NT THE LIDKING FLAMES...
WONOEH WHENE HE CAN GE...
THE FINE LEAPS UPWARO! THE GUNNING LOGG SPNTTEN NND SNAP! YOU SIGH! YES! THE DNIVE THNOUGN THE RAIN HAS EXNAUSTED YOU...
I'O JUST AS SOON SPEND THE NIGHT OOWN HERE SEFONE THIS FIRE! IT'S SO...WARM!
SUDDENLY THE BLOOO FREEZES IN YOUN VEINS! FNOM OUT OF THE ONNKNESS COMES...
A MOAN!
GOO... WHNT A HOR-RIBLE SOUND!
YOU JUMP TO YOUN FEET! YOU STHNIN YOUR ENRS.. LISTENING! THEN YOU HENN IT AGAIN! AN AGO-NIZING MOAN! IT MNKES THE HAIN ON YOUN NEDK CRAWL...
IT'S GOMING FNOM BEHIND THAT DOOR!
YOU STEAL YOWAND THE OOON! YOU REACH OUT CAUTIOUSLY AND TWIST THE KNOS! IT SWINGS OPEN! STEPS LEAO OOWN INYO THE DARKNESS! FROM DOWN THENE... IN THE BLACKNESS..YOU HEAR IT AGAIN... SUT WEAKEN...
I'VE GOT YO SEE WNNT IT IS! PENHAPS THE INNKEEPEN...
YOU MOVE SLOWLY OOWN NICKETY STEPS! ALL IS SILENT NOW! YOU LISTEN! THEN ANOTHER SOUNO NENGNES YOUN EANS! A STEADY DRIP.DRIP
LIKE DNOPS OF WNTEN.. FALLING INTO N BUCKET...
YOU CURSE YOUNSELF FOR NOT BRINGING N FLASHLIGHT! THE DRIP...DRIP..DRIPPING IS CLOSEN NOW! YOU'RE NLMOST UPON IT! THEN YOU NEAN THE WNIMPERING.. THE WENK SND WHIMPENING! YOU SEANON YOUR POCKETS FOR A MNTCH! YOU FINO ONE! YOU STRIKE IT! THE CELLNN FILLS WITH LIGNT...
DN.LORD!
3

IT IS A MAN! A STRANGER... NOT THE INNKEEPER! HE LIES ON A TABLE...TIED THERE BY ROPES! HIS EYES ARE WIDE IH HORROR AS HE STARES AT THE BURNING MATCH! THEN YOU LOOK DOWN...

A PAN! A PAN HALF-FILLED WITH... BLOOD!

YOUR STOMACH HEAVES! YOU WRETCH WITH NAUSEA! THE MAN'S ARM HANGS LIMPLY...THE WRIST SLASHED! THE BLOOD TRICKLES DOWN HIS FINGERTIPS AND DRIPS INTO THE PAN! HE WHIMPERS...LIKE A DOG THAT HAS JUST BEEN STRUCK BY A CAR...

HE...HE'S BLEEDING TO DEATH! I'VE GOT TO...

THE MATCH SURHS YOU AND YOU DROP IT IN PAIN! THE DARKNESS GLOSES IN! THE STEADY DRIPPING CONTINUES! SUDDENLY...

THE CELLAR DOOR! SOMEONE'S COMING!

YOU HIDE! YOU COWER SEHIND A PILE OF SOXES! A MAN THUNPS DOWH THE STEPS! HE OARRIES A LAHTENH! HIS EYES GLEAM IH THE FLICKERING YELLOW LIGHT...

THE INNKEEPER!

YOU WATCH, TOO FRIGHTENED TO MOVE! HE APPROACHES THE MAN TIED TO THE TABLE! THE WHIMPERING HAS CEASED NOW! EVEN THE DRIPPING HAS SLOWED CONSIDERABLY! A CREEPING HORROR TELLS YOU...

HE... HE'S DEAD!

THE INNKEEPER NODS HIS HEAD AS IF IN SILENT AGREEMENT! HE UNTIES THE LIMP BODY AND SLINGS IT OVER HIS SHOULDERS! HE CARRIES IT THROUGH A DOORWAY...

I...I'VE GOT TO GET AWAY FROM HERE! THE IHHKEEPEN... HE... HE'S A MANIAC!

YOU START TOWARD THE STAIRS! YOU AVOID LOOKING AT THE PAN ON THE FLOOR! THEN, YOU STOP...STARTLED! A MOTOR HAS STARTED! IT THROBS...MATCHING THE RAGING BEAT OF YOUR OWN HEART! YOUR EYES FOLLOW THE SOUND...

IT...IT LOOKS LIKE A FROZEN-FOOD-LOCKER!

A MORBID DUHIOSITY DRIVES TOU FORWARD! YOU HESITATE BEFORE IT... BUT THEN TOU LIFT THE LID...

RD! *NO!* LORD... *LORD, NO!*

IRSIDE THE HEFRISERATED LOOKER IB A BAHHEL...A BARREL DF REDDISH-BHOWR LIDUID! A BAHHEL DF *BLOOD!* YOU SLAM THE LID BHUT AHD TUHR...LEAHING OH THE LOCKEH FOR BALARDE...

HE...HE'S A *VAMPIRE!* RE COLLECTS THE *BLOOD* OF HIS *VICTIMS!*

YOU START TOWAHD THE STAIRWAY... BUT THEH TOU REAH THE IHHKEEPER RETUHH-ING! TOU JUST HAVE ENOUBR TIME TO HIDE! RE ENTEHS THE RODM... HIS EYES BLEAM-ING... RIS LIFB MOIST! HE FIDKB UP THE PAN OF HED LIDUID FROM TRE FLOOR...

THEN...AB YOU WATCR IR TERROH... HE OFEHS THE FREEZER AHD POURS THE CONTENTS DF TRE PAH IHTO TRE BARREL...

THEN HE BEBINS TO SHUT THE LID.. HE BTOPS! RE OPENS IT AGAIR! HIB CRUEL LIPS SPREAD IN AN EVIL GRIN! HE REACRES FOR A TIN CUP HANGING ON TRE WALL...

HE STOOPS DVEH, HEAOHING IRYO THE BAHREL! YOU HEAH THE SPLASHING OF THE SIOKLY HED-BRDWR LIDUID AS RE DIPS IRTO IT...

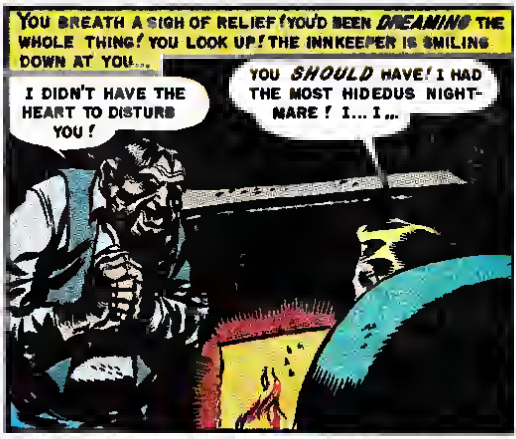
HE... HE'S GOING TO...

YOU WATCR RIN BRIRS TRE CUP TO NIS LIPS AHD DRINK IT ODWH! A SMALL BTREAH TRICKLES DOWR RIS CHIR! YOU BDREAM...

YAAAAAAAH!


IT IS TOO MUCH FOR YOU! YOU DASH YOWARD THE STAIRS SHRIEKING! YOUR HEAD SPINS...THE STAIRS SEEM TO MELT BEFORE YOU! YOU SPRAWL, HALF-WAY UP!
YOU... YOU'VE BEEN SPYING ON ME!
IN A FLASH HE IS UPON YOU...HIS STRONG HANDS HOLDING YOU! YOU'RE WEAK WITH FEAR AND NAUSEA! YOU CANNOT FIGHT HIM...
I HADN'T PLANNED ON ANOTHER VICTIM TONIGHT!
HE CARRIES YOU TO THE TABLE! HE TIES YOU DOWN! YOU SCREAM...
IT IS USELESS TO CRY OUT! WE ARE QUITE ALONE IN THE INN! HE WAS THE ONLY OTHER GUEST...
YOU WATCH, WIDE-EYED, AS HE BRINGS THE PAN AND PLACES IT UNDER THE TABLE...UNDER YOUR HANGING ARM...
YOU... YOU'RE INHUMAN... A MAD FIEND!
PERHAPS!
THE KNIFE BLADE GLITTERS IN THE LANTERN LIGHT! HE COMES TOWARD YOU... BRANDISHING IT...
HAVE PITY...SOB... PITY...
I NEED YOUR BLOOD! I MUST SAVE IT...
THE KNIFE BURNS AS THE COLD BLADE SLIDES INTO YOUR WRIST! YOUR HEAD SWIMS! YOU CAN HEAR HIM TALKING ..AND THE STEADY DRIP... DRIP...
SOMETIMES I HAVE NO GUESTS FOR WEEKS! BUT I DON'T HAVE TO WORRY! I HAVE MY SUPPLY...THERE...READY WHEN I NEED IT...
YOUR HEAD POUNDS NOW! THE ROOM WEAVES BEFORE YOU! YOU FEEL YOURSELF SLIPPING...SLIPPING INTO THE BLACKNESS OF UNCONSCIOUSNESS...WEAK... DIZZY... THE DRIP... DRIP... DRIP...
G


SUDDENLY YOU OPEN YOUR EYES! YOU SQUINT! THE FIRE IS LOW NOW...BUT GLOWING WARM! YOU ARE IN THE CHAIR BEFORE IT...
OH, GOD! IT WAS ONLY A DREAM! A HORRIBLE NIGHTMARE!

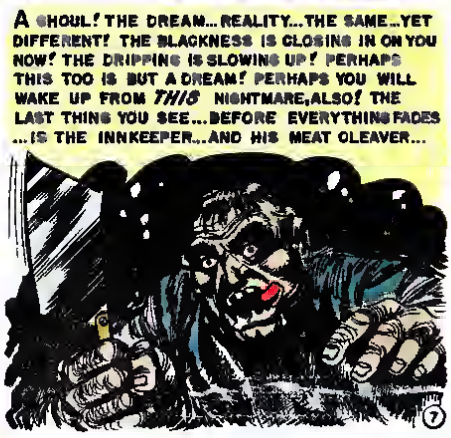

YOU BREATH A SIGH OF RELIEF! YOU'D BEEN DREAMING THE WHOLE THING! YOU LOOK UP! THE INNKEEPER IS SMILING DOWN AT YOU...
I DIDN'T HAVE THE HEART TO DISTURB YOU!
YOU SHOULD HAVE! I HAD THE MOST HIDEOUS NIGHTMARE! I... I...


SUDDENLY YOU HEAR IT! THE STEADY DRIPPING! YOU START TO RISE! YOU CANNOT MOVE! YOU'RE TIED TO THE CHAIR! AND BENEATH YOUR SLASHED WRIST IS A PAN...HALF-FILLED WITH BLOOD...
IT'S TRUE! MY DREAM...YOU ARE A VAMPIRE!


THE INNKEEPER'S SMILE VANISHES AS HE SCOWLS AT YOU! THERE IS DISGUST ON HIS FACE...
HOW DARE YOU CALL ME A VAMPIRE!


YOU'RE DRAINING MY BLOOD! YOU'RE GOING TO PUT IT IN THE BARREL... DOWNSTAIRS...IN THE FREEZE-CHEST! YOU ARE A VAMPIRE...


YOU'RE WRONG, MY FRIEND! I AM NO VAMPIRE! I HATE BLOOD! I CAN'T STAND MEAT THAT TASTES OF BLOOD! I AM A GHOUL! I LIVE ON BLOODLESS...FLESH! I HAVE A FREEZE-LOCKER DOWNSTAIRS...BUT IT'S WELL STOCKED WITH DEAD HUMAN FLESH!


A GHOUL! THE DREAM...REALITY...THE SAME...YET DIFFERENT! THE BLACKNESS IS CLOSING IN ON YOU NOW! THE DRIPPING IS SLOWING UP! PERHAPS THIS TOO IS BUT A DREAM! PERHAPS YOU WILL WAKE UP FROM THIS NIGHTMARE, ALSO! THE LAST THING YOU SEE...BEFORE EVERYTHING FADES ...IS THE INNKEEPER...AND HIS MEAT CLEAVER...

THE VAULT OF HORROR!

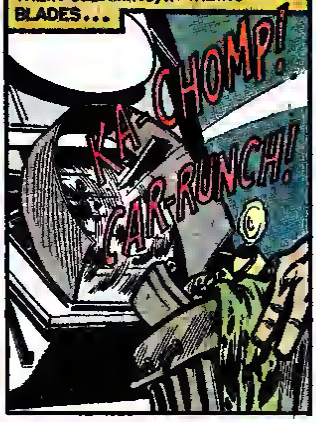
HEH, HEH! AN INCREASE IN THE POPULATION OF A GREAT CITY'S TEEMING MILLIONS IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE STATISTICIAN... BUT TO THE SANITATION DEPT. IT MEANS ONLY THAT MUCH MORE GARBAGE TO COLLECT...



THE CITY HAS A HUGE, EFFICIENT SYSTEM FOR THE REMOVAL OF TRASH, AND ONE OF ITS MOST RESPECTED ASSETS IS ITS FLEET OF STREAMLINED TRUCKS!



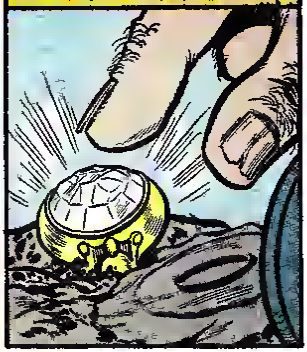
THESE PROUD VEHICLES COVER EVERY PART OF THE METROPOLIS, AND THERE ARE BUT FEW ITEMS THAT CANNOT BE CRUSHED, BROKEN AND HACKED TO BITS BY THEIR GLEAMING, WHIRLING BLADES...



HAVING EATEN THEIR FILL OF GARBAGE, THEY AT ONCE TRAVEL TO THE CITY DUMP AND PURR CONTENTEDLY WHILE THEY DISCHARGE THEIR CARGO.

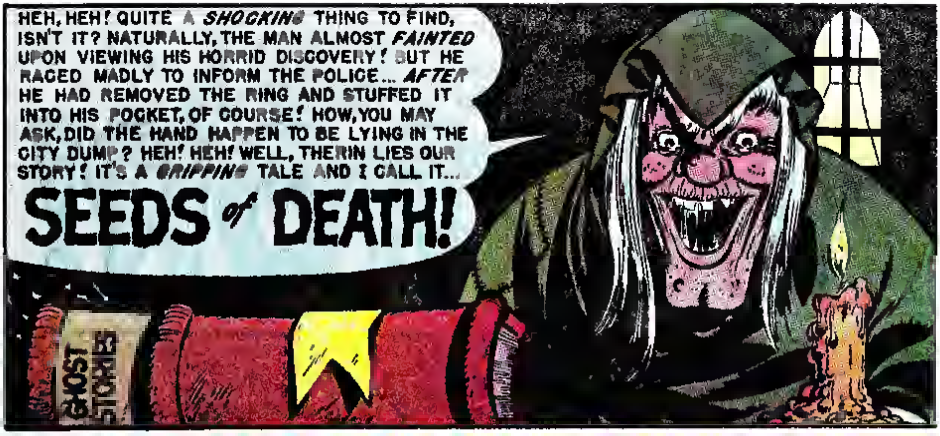


HERE IS WHERE EVERY BIT OF THE CITY'S COLLECTED WASTE IS BROUGHT. AND IT IS HERE, IN THIS SCAVENGERS' PARADISE, THAT ONE MAY FIND...



...ALMOST ANYTHING!

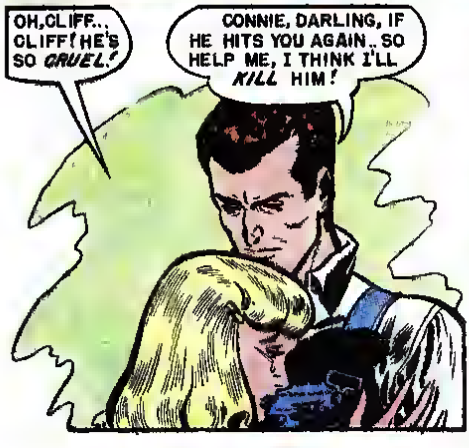


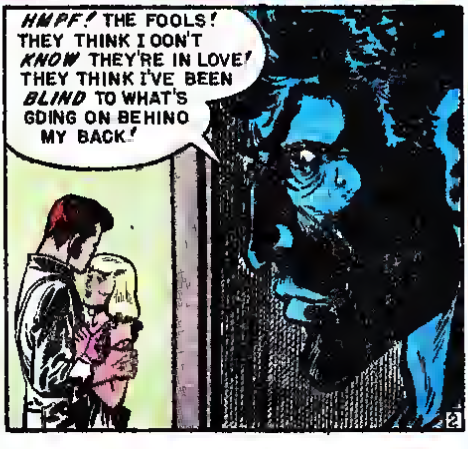

HEH, HEH! QUITE A SHOCKING THING TO FIND, ISN'T IT? NATURALLY, THE MAN ALMOST FAINTED UPON VIEWING HIS HORRID DISCOVERY! BUT HE RAGED MADLY TO INFORM THE POLICE... AFTER HE HAD REMOVED THE RING AND STUFFED IT INTO HIS POCKET, OF COURSE! HOW, YOU MAY ASK, DID THE HAND HAPPEN TO BE LYING IN THE CITY DUMP? HEH! HEH! WELL, THERIN LIES OUR STORY! IT'S A GRIPPING TALE AND I CALL IT...
SEEDS of DEATH!


LET'S GO BACK IN TIME TO WHERE OUR STORY REALLY BEGAN... TO A SMALL FARM ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE LARGE CITY.


ON THIS PARTICULAR FARM LIVED THE OWNER, BASIL WOODS... HIS WIFE CONNIE...


...AND A HIRED HAND NAMED CLIFF!


OH, CLIFF... CLIFF! HE'S SO CRUEL!
CONNIE, DARLING, IF HE HITS YOU AGAIN.. SO HELP ME, I THINK I'LL KILL HIM!


HMPF! THE FOOLS! THEY THINK I DON'T KNOW THEY'RE IN LOVE! THEY THINK I'VE BEEN BLIND TO WHAT'S GOING ON BEHIND MY BACK!


ND MAN CAN TAKE MY WIFE FROM ME AND LIVE! I'LL FIX THE DIRTY HOME-WRECKER WHEN THE TIME COMES!
HEH,HEH! WELL,THAT'S THE SITUATION, DEAR READERS... THE ETERNAL TRIANGLE! TIME PASSED... AND BASIL WAITED PATIENTLY, UNTIL ONE DAY...
CLIFF, WHILE YOU'RE IN TOWN TODAY, WOULD YOU BUY ME SOME GARDENIA SEEDS? I WANT TO PLANT THEM IN THE GARDEN!
SURE, MRS. WOODS!
HE'LL BE IN THE CITY ALL DAY... WON'T BE BACK TILL LATE TO-NIGHT! AND HE'LL PROBABLY TAKE THE SHORT-CUT 'CROSS THE FIELD TO THE HOUSE... HMM-M...
... AND SO, LATE THAT NIGHT...
'EVENING, CLIFF! DID YOU GET MY WIFE'S GARDENIA SEEDS?
EH? OH... HI, MR. WOODS! YES, I HAVE THEM RIGHT HERE!
HERE THEY ARE! WANT TO TAKE A LOOK?
SEED
THWINK!
;GASP!; THERE...IT'S DONE! NOW TO BURY HIM...;GASP!;...RIGHT HERE! HEE,HEE! IN TIME TO COME, HIS BODY'LL MAKE FINE FERTILIZER FOR THIS FIELD! ;GASP!;
3



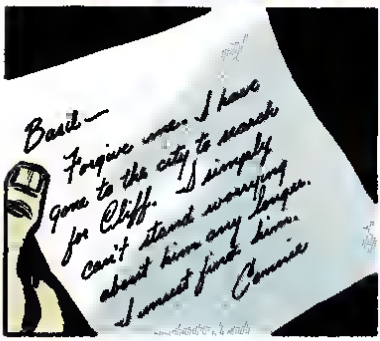




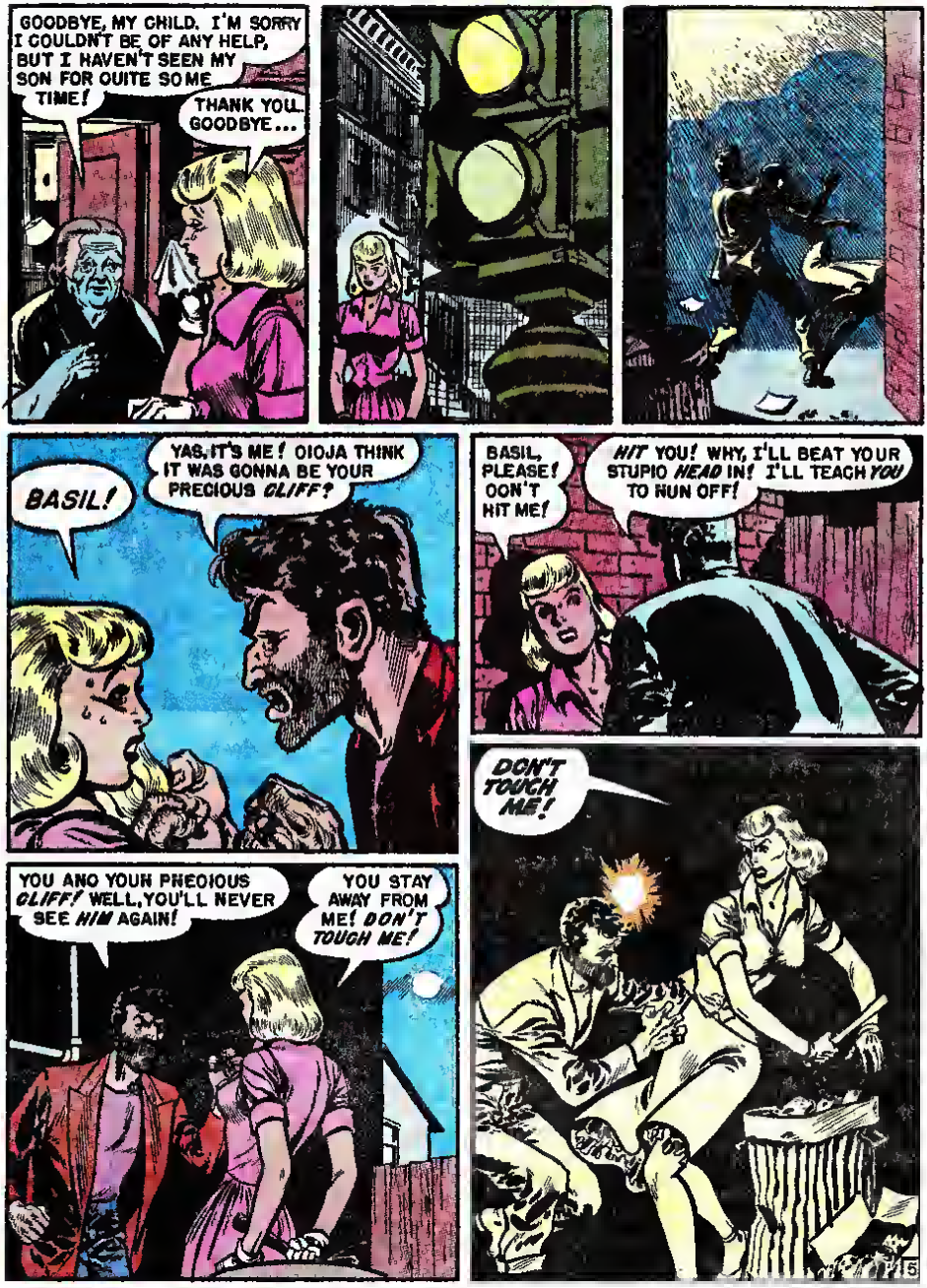


WELL, THE DAYS *DID* PASS BUT CONNIE *DIDN'T* FORGET! AND ONE EVENING AS BASIL RETURNED FROM THE FIELDS..








GOODBYE, MY CHILD. I'M SORRY I COULDN'T BE OF ANY HELP, BUT I HAVEN'T SEEN MY SON FOR QUITE SOME TIME!
THANK YOU. GOODBYE...
BASIL!
YAS, IT'S ME! OIOJA THINK IT WAS GONNA BE YOUR PRECIOUS CLIFF?
BASIL, PLEASE! OON'T HIT ME!
HIT YOU! WHY, I'LL BEAT YOUR STUPIO HEAD IN! I'LL TEACH YOU TO NUN OFF!
YOU AND YOUR PHECIOUS CLIFF! WELL, YOU'LL NEVER SEE HIM AGAIN!
YOU STAY AWAY FROM ME! DON'T TOUCH ME!
DON'T TOUCH ME!

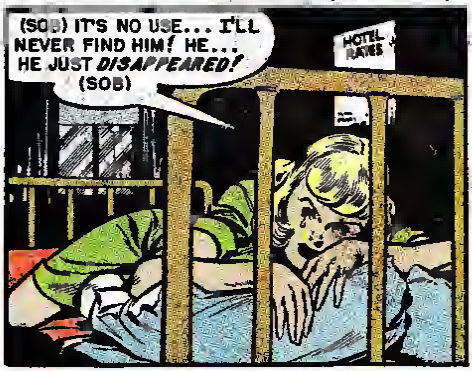

OH,GOOD LORD! WHAT HAVE I OONE?(SOB) HE'S UNCONSCIOUS!
(SOB!) I'M...I'M SO CONFUSED.. SO FRIGHTENED! WHAT'S THAT NOISE?
A TRUCK. COMING OOWN THE STREET! IT'S STOPPING! GOOD HEAVENS! I CAN'T LET THEM FIND ME HERE! WHAT'LL I DO?
WAIT! I KNOW... I'LL JUST ORAG BASIL.. (UNH!) OVER HERE BY THE WALL.(GASP!)
(UNH!)... AND STUFF HIM INTO THIS..(GASP!) THIS BIG CAN! THEY WON'T SEE HIM HERE.. (GASP!) PUT SOME PAPERS OVER HIM..
...ANO WHILE THEIR BACKS ARE TURNEO...
..I'LL CALMLY WALK AWAY...
DSC
6







HEH! NATURALLY, CONNIE WAS UNAWARE OF HER HUSBAND'S FATE, AND FOR THE NEXT FEW WEEKS, SHE SEARCHED THE CITY IN VAIN... FOR CLIFF...

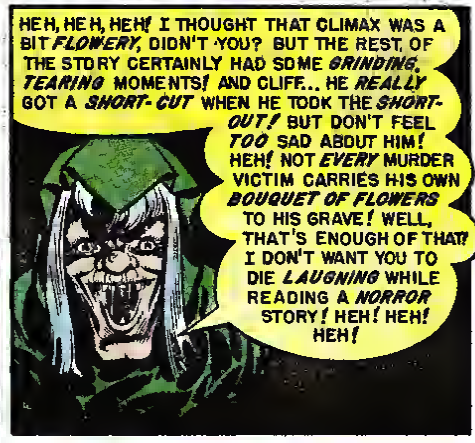


FINALLY, SHE RETURNED TO THE FARM. SAD AND WEARY, SHE TROD THE SHORT-CUT ACROSS THE FIELD TOWARD THE HOUSE. SUDDENLY, SHE STOPPED...HER EYES WIDENED!



SHE STOOD TRANSFIXED IN HORROR! BEFORE HER, NOT TEN FEET FROM WHERE SHE STOOD, WAS A MOUND OF GARDENIAS! ALL AT ONCE, THERE CAME THE SHOCKING REALIZATION THAT AT LAST SHE HAD FOUND... HER PRECIOUS CLIFF.






The
Old Witch


FEAR
HERE ARE TALES THAT WILL USHER YOU INTO
THE HAUNT OF
FEAR
10¢
FEATURING
THE OLD WITCH
THE VAULT-KEEPER
THE CRYPT-KEEPER

FEAR

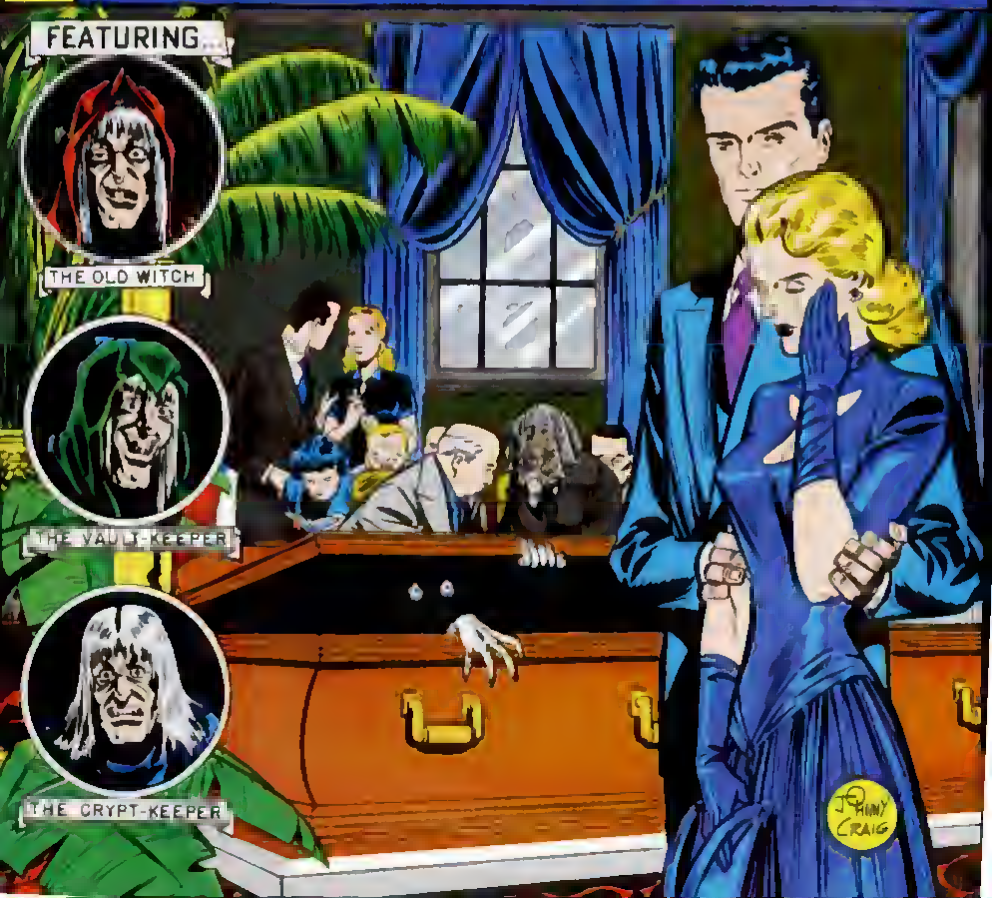
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Haunt of Fear (USPS 008308) Vol. 1 No. 6 February 1994. Published quarterly in November, February, May and August by Russ Cochran, Publisher, 202 Alt. West Plains, MO 65775-3532. **Second-class postage paid at West Plains, MO.** Entire contents © 1993 by William M. Gaines, Agent, Inc. *Haunt of Fear* #6 © 1951 by Fables Publishing Co., Inc. re © 1985 by William M. Gaines, Agent, Inc. All rights reserved. Nothing herein contained may be reproduced without the written permission of William M. Gaines, New York, New York. Annual subscription rate $6 ($12 outside US payable in US funds). Printed in U.S.A. **Postmaster: send address changes to Haunt of Fear, Russ Cochran, PO Box 469, West Plains, MO 65775-0469.**

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE. HEE! DON'T JUST STARD THERE! COME IN! COME IN! YOU ALL KNOW *ME* BY NOW... THE OLD WITCH, MISTRESS OF *THE HAUNT OF FEAR*! DRAW UP CLOSE TO THE BUBBLING, STEAMING CAULDRON! I HAVE A STORY TO TELL YOU! A STORY THAT WILL ABSOLUTELY *HORRIFY* YOU! A YARN OF *TERROR*... OF *REVENGE*... OF *DEATH!* THIS TASTY TALE, WHICH I AM ABOUT TO DISH OUT TO YOU, I CALL...

A STRANGE UNDERTAKING...

MY STORY BEGINS ONE COLD WINTRY DAY ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF A SMALL TOWN! SNOW BLANKETS EVERYTHING. IT COVERS THE COUNTRYSIDE LIKE A WHITE SHROUD. HEAVY, COLD, SILENT! IT LAYS THICK ON THE ROOF TOPS... IN DRIFTS AGAINST THE HOUSES... AND DEADLY STILL ON THE GRAVES OF THE TOWN CEMETERY...

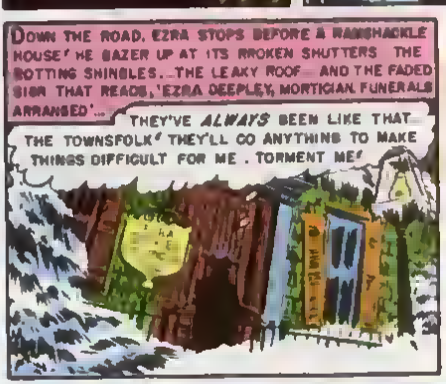
HMMPH! GROUND'S FROZEN... FROZEN *SOLID!* LUCKY THING I HAVEN'T ANY CUSTOMERS! COULDN'T *BURY* 'EM, ANYWAY!

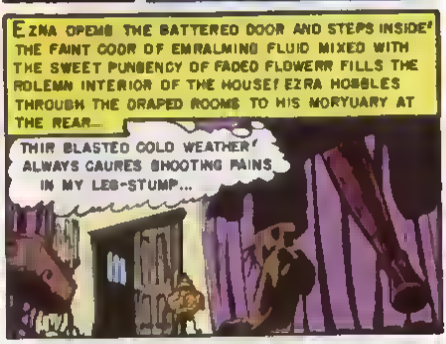
HOWDY, EZRA! ADMIRING YOUR HANDYWORK?

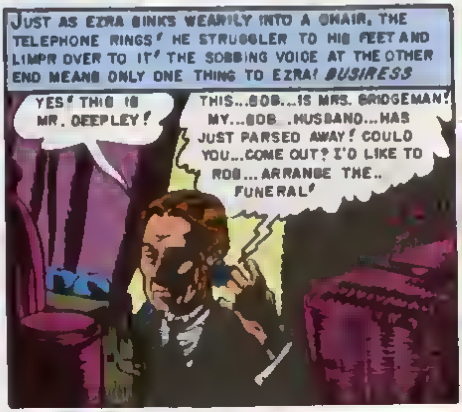

THAT'S THE CARETAKER OF THE CEMETERY GREETING EZRA DEEPLEY, THE TOWN UNDERTAKER...
JUST CHECKING CLEM. JUST CHECKING!
I DIG YUH, EZRA! HAW, HAW!

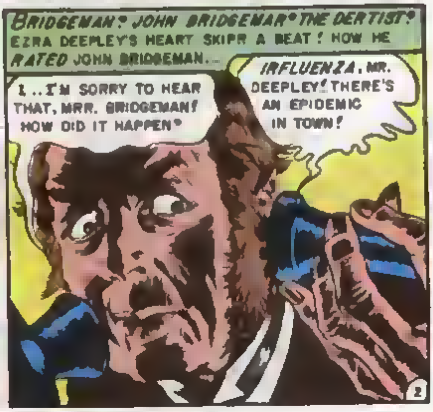

THAT'S THE WAY IT ALWAYS IS WITH EZNA DEEPLEY! THEY KID HIM JOKE WITH HIM, INSULT HIM!.. JURT BECAUSE HE'S AN UNDERTAKER..
DON'T TAKE ANY WOODEN COFFINS, EZRA!
WHY DON'T YOU DROP DEAD, CLEM?


EZRA DEEPLEY TAKES A LAST LOOK AROUND THE SNOW-LADEN CEMETERY, TURNS, AND PLODS ON HOME...
THEY HATE ME! ALL OF THEM! THEY DESPISE ME FOR WHAT I AM! WHY... WHY? I DON'T HARM THEM! I JUST... BURY THEM AFTER THEY'RE GONE!


DOWN THE ROAD, EZRA STOPS BEFORE A RAMSHACKLE HOUSE! HE GAZES UP AT ITS BROKEN SHUTTERS THE ROTTING SHINGLES...THE LEAKY ROOF— AND THE FADED SIGN THAT READS, 'EZRA DEEPLEY, MORTICIAN. FUNERALS ARRANGED'...
THEY'VE ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THAT THE TOWNSFOLK! THEY'LL GO ANYTHING TO MAKE THINGS DIFFICULT FOR ME. TORMENT ME!


EZNA OPENS THE BATTERED DOOR AND STEPS INSIDE! THE FAINT ODOR OF EMBALMING FLUID MIXED WITH THE SWEET PUNGENCY OF FADED FLOWERS FILLS THE SOLEMN INTERIOR OF THE HOUSE! EZRA HOBBLES THROUGH THE DRAPED ROOMS TO HIS MORTUARY AT THE REAR...
THIS BLASTED COLD WEATHER! ALWAYS CAUSES SHOOTING PAINS IN MY LEG-STUMP...


JUST AS EZRA SINKS WEARILY INTO A CHAIR, THE TELEPHONE RINGS! HE STRUGGLES TO HIS FEET AND LIMPS OVER TO IT! THE SOBBING VOICE AT THE OTHER END MEANS ONLY ONE THING TO EZRA! BUSINESS
YES! THIS IS MR. DEEPLEY!
THIS...SOB...IS MRS. BRIDGEMAN! MY...SOB...HUSBAND...HAS JUST PASSED AWAY! COULD YOU...COME OUT? I'D LIKE TO SOB... ARRANGE THE... FUNERAL!


BRIDGEMAN? JOHN BRIDGEMAN? THE DENTIST? EZRA DEEPLEY'S HEART SKIPS A BEAT! HOW HE HATED JOHN BRIDGEMAN...
I...I'M SORRY TO HEAR THAT, MRS. BRIDGEMAN! HOW DID IT HAPPEN?
INFLUENZA, MR. DEEPLEY! THERE'S AN EPIDEMIC IN TOWN!


THE ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE, AND JOHN BRIDGEMAN'S BODY IS BROUGHT TO EZNA'S ESTABLISHMENT' AFTER THE MOURNING WIFE AND RELATIVES LEAVE, EZRA WHEELS THE DECEASED INTO HIS MORTUARY.
YOU... JOHN BRIDGEMAN' YOU HATED ME TOO, BECAUSE OF MY PROFESSION' REMEMBER WHEN I CAME TO YOU WITH ...A CAVITY...
YOU JOKED WITH ME.. CHIDED ME...'
WELL, WELL! EZRA DEEPLEY! WHAT'S COOKING AT THE CREMATORY, EZRA? HAW, HAW!
I ..I HAVE A TOOTH-ACHE, DOCTOR!
'...AND THEN YOU TOLD ME THE TOOTH WOULD HAVE TO COME OUT'
SORRY, EZRA! I CAN'T GIVE YOU GAS! I'M FRESH OUT! THIS MAY HURT!'
I...I'M READY, DOCTOR!
YOU DID THAT ON PURPOSE, DIDN'T YOU? YOU DELIBERAYELY HURT ME! YOU COULD HAVE GIVEN ME NOVOCAIN. SOMETHING ..ONLY YOU PREFERNED TO PULL THE YCOTH. PAINFULLY! WELL, JOHN BRIDGEMAN, NOW I CAN GET EVEN!
THE FUNERAL IS HELD THE NEXT DAY' THE LITTLE GROUP OF MOURNERS STAND ABOUY THE COFFIN AS A BNIEF SERVICE IS HELD IN THE BITING COLD! A LITTLE WAY OFF, EZRA DEEPLEY WATCHES...
IF THEY ONLY KNEW, JOHN BRIDGEMAN' IF THEY ONLY KNEW WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE NOW...WHAY I DID TO YOU... TO GET EVEN...
THE SMALL BAND OF BLACK-CLAD PEOPLE MOVES SILENTLY AWAY AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE SERVICE, AND EZNA STEPS FORWARD..
WHAY YOU GOING TO DO NOW, EZRA? YOU GAIN'T BURY YHE POOR CRITYER' GROUND'S FROZEN!
HELP ME GET YHE COFFIN TO THAT MAUSOLEUM, CLEM' WE'LL STONE IY THENE TILL THE GROUND YHAWS'
EZRA AND CLEM CARRY THE COFFIN TO A MAUSOLEUM! THE NAME CANVID ABOVE THE DOOR IN LARGE LETTERS READS...'DEEPLEY'...
BONNA STONE 'IM IN YOUR OWN MAUSOLEUM, EH, EZNA'
YES' YHE FAMILY WILL NEVER KNOW' AND IN YHE SPRING, WE'LL BUNY HIM'
3

THE PHONE IS MINDING AS EZRA ENTERS HIS HOUSE! ANOTHER DEATH FROM INFLUENZA! THE EPIDEMIC IS GETTING SERIOUS

WHO? WHO DID YOU SAY...?

THE MAYOR, HIMSELF! FREDRICK DUNHILL!

EZRA'S BRAIN REELS! *TWO* WITHIN A WEEK! TWO OF HIS MOST *HATED ENEMIES!* FIRST THE SADISTIC DENTIST, JOHN BRIDGEMAN, AND NOW.. *NOW*, FREDRICK DUNHILL, THE MAYOR... THE POLITICIAN .. THE *THIEF!* EZRA'S THOUGHTS GO BACK..BACK TO THAT FATEFUL DAY...

SORRY, MR. DEEPLEY! THE MAYOR *JUST* ISSUED IT! A *NEW ORDINANCE!* YOU'LL HAVE TO *MOVE* YOUR MORTUARY OUT OF THE TOWN LIMITS!

BUT, HOW *CAN* I? THIS PROPERTY IS ALL I *HAVE!* I CAN'T *AFFORD* TO BUY ANOTHER PLACE!

THAT NIGHT, AS EZRA STANDS OVER THE DEAD MAYOR..

YOU FORCED ME OUT... *FORCED* ME TO SELL SO THAT I HAD TO MOVE TO *THIS* RUN-DOWN PLACE... FORCED ME TO SELL *CHEAP!* LATER, I FOUND OUT IT WAS YOUR *BROTHER-IN-LAW* WHO BOUGHT MY PLACE! AND THE TOWN BOUGHT IT FROM *HIM* THE NEXT YEAR...

HE *SPLIT* WITH YOU, *DIDN'T* HE, FREDRICK DUNHILL? YOUR BROTHER-IN-LAW *SPLIT THE PROFIT WITH YOU!* OVER *TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS!* YOU *CHEAT!* YOU *LYING POLITICIAN! DIRTY LIES... DIRTY PROMISES!* WELL, I'LL *SHOW* YOU! I'M GOING TO GET *EVEN, NOW!*

THE NEXT DAY WHEN MAYOR DUNHILL IS BURIED, EZRA AGAIN WATCHES THE PROCEEDINGS...

LUCKY FOR THEM THEY CAN'T *SEE* YOU, FREDRICK DUNHILL! LUCKY FOR THEM THEY CAN'T *SEE* HOW I GOT *EVEN!*

...AND AFTER THE MOURNERS LEAVE...

GONNA PUT HIM WITH THE *OTHER*, MR. DEEPLEY?

YES, GLEM! C'MON! HELP ME!

SO A SECOND COFFIN IS STORED IN EZRA DEEPLEY'S OWN MAUSOLEUM! STORED TILL THE SPRING THAW WHEN IT CAN BE BURIED.

THIS EPIDEMIC'S GOOD FOR BUSINESS, EH, EZRA?

OH SHUT UP, GLEM!

THE THIRD VICTIM OF THE INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC IS HORACE STREETWALL... THE TOWN BANKER! EZRA IS ELATED! THIS IS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE! OLD MOREY-BAGS STREETWALL! HOW EZRA HATES *HIM!* EVER SINCE THE TIME EZRA WENT TO SEE HIM... TO BORROW MONEY...

THE PLACE... IT'S SO RUN-DOWN, MR. STREETWALL! I WAS FORCED TO MOVE TO IT... BUT...

YOU WANT TO BORROW MOREY TO ALTER IT, EH, DEEPLEY?

YES, SIR! THE ROOF LEAKS, THE SHINGLES ARE BROKEN AND ROTTED! I...

SORRY, DEEPLEY! YOU'RE A POOR RISK! MY ANSWER IS *NO!* GOOD-DAY!

AND SO... WHEN THE TIME COMES FOR EZRA TO EMBALM HORACE STREETWALL'S BODY...

MONEY, STREETWALL! THAT'S *ALL* YOU THOUGHT ABOUT! MONEY! *MONEY* WAS YOUR *LIFE*... YOUR *MIND!* WELL, NOW YOUR LIFE IS OVER... AND *I*... *I'M* GOING TO GET *EVEN*...

AFTER THE FUNERAL OF THE TOWN BANKER, A THIRD COFFIN IS STORED IN EZRA DEEPLEY'S MAUSOLEUM...

GHOUND'S STILL FROZEN, EH, EZRA?

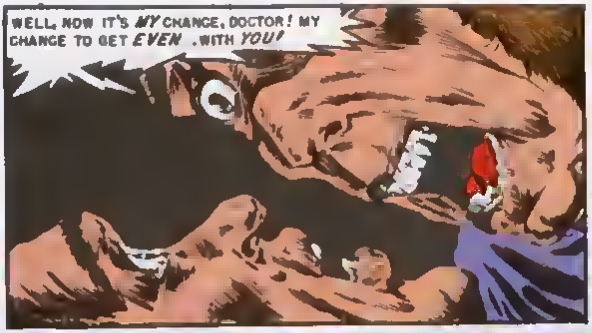
YES! HMMM! GETTING CROWDED IN HERE!

TWO DAYS LATER... EZRA DEEPLEY HAD A FOURTH CUSTOMER! A FOURTH VICTIM OF THE INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC! THIS TIME HE RECEIVED THE NEWS WITH ECSTATIC JOY! HIS WORST ENEMY... HIS VERY *WORST*... CLAUDE FOWLER... THE MAN WHO HAD AMPUTATED EZRA DEEPLEY'S LEG!

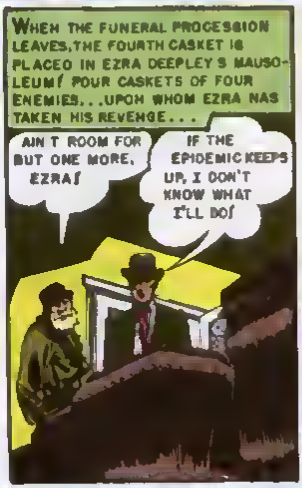
DOCTOR FOWLER'S BODY IS BROUGHT TO THE MORTUARY! EZRA LOCKS THE DOOR AFTER THE SOBBING FAMILY LEAVES AND STANDS OVER THE PROSTRATE CORPSE...

BUTCHER! DRUNKEN BUTCHER! REMEMBER *ME*, DOCTOR FOWLER? REMEMBER *EZRA DEEPLEY?* THE MAN WHOSE LEG YOU *NEEDLESSLY AMPUTATED!?*

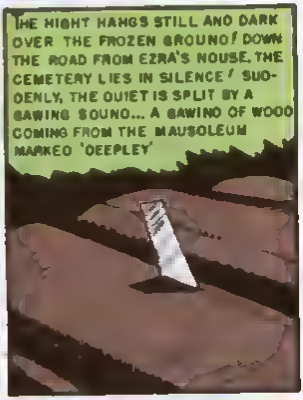
YOU CAME TO THE HOSPITAL *DRUNK! I* HAD HAD AN ACCIDENT... SEVERELY INJURED MY LEG! YOU AMPUTATED! YOU *COULD* HAVE *SAVED* IT,... ONLY *NO*... YOU WERE TOO *DRUNK*... TOO FULL OF *WHISKEY!* INSTEAD... YOU BUTCHER... YOU *CUT IT OFF!* NOW, I'M FORCED TO WEAR AN *ARTIFICIAL* LEG... *SEE?*


WELL, NOW IT'S MY CHANCE, DOCTOR! MY CHANCE TO GET EVEN . WITH YOU!

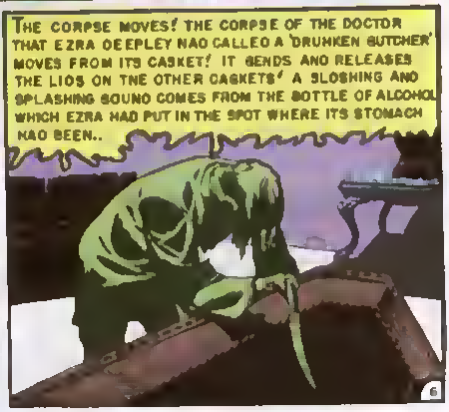

THE NEXT DAY, AS DOCTOR CLAUDE FOWLER'S FUNERAL IS BEING HELD...
TOO BAD, DOCTOR FOWLER! TOO BAD THEY CAN'T SEE YOU AS YOU REALLY ARE... AS I'VE FIXED YOU!

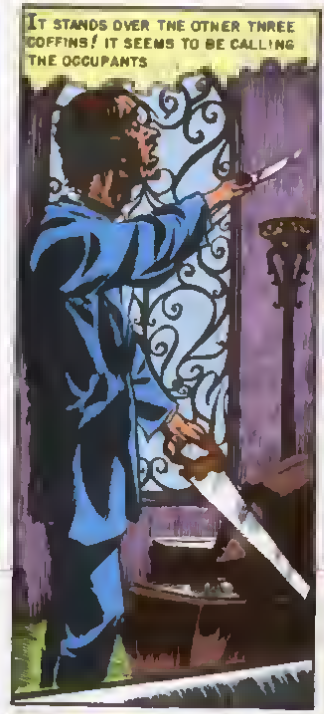

WHEN THE FUNERAL PROCESSION LEAVES, THE FOURTH CASKET IS PLACED IN EZRA DEEPLEY'S MAUSOLEUM! FOUR CASKETS OF FOUR ENEMIES... UPON WHOM EZRA HAS TAKEN HIS REVENGE...
AIN'T ROOM FOR BUT ONE MORE, EZRA!
IF THE EPIDEMIC KEEPS UP, I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'LL DO!

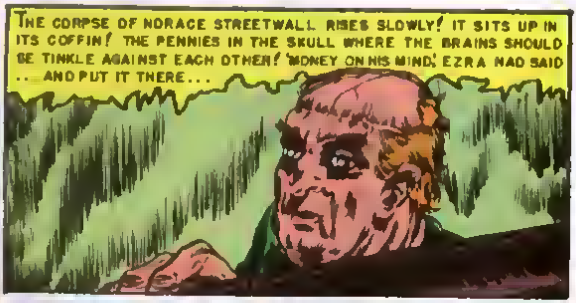

BUT... UNLUCKILY FOR EZRA DEEPLEY, THE INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC SUBSIDES AND THERE ARE NO MORE DEATHS! EZRA SITS, ONE NIGHT, IN HIS MORTUARY... LAUGHING TO HIMSELF...
HEH, HEH! I FIXED THEM... THE FOUR OF THEM! I FIXED THEM GOOD!


THE NIGHT HANGS STILL AND DARK OVER THE FROZEN GROUND! DOWN THE ROAD FROM EZRA'S HOUSE, THE CEMETERY LIES IN SILENCE! SUDDENLY, THE QUIET IS SPLIT BY A GRATING SOUND... A GRATING OF WOOD COMING FROM THE MAUSOLEUM MARKED 'DEEPLEY'


THE LID OF THE CASKET IS SAWED OPEN AND THE CORPSE OF DOCTOR FOWLER RISES! INSTEAD OF HANDS, A SAW AND A BUTCHER KNIFE DANGLE AT ITS SIDES... THE SAW AND THE KNIFE THAT EZRA HAD SEWN THERE...


THE CORPSE MOVES! THE CORPSE OF THE DOCTOR THAT EZRA DEEPLEY HAD CALLED A 'DRUNKEN BUTCHER' MOVES FROM ITS CASKET! IT BENDS AND RELEASES THE LIDS ON THE OTHER CASKETS! A SLOSHING AND SPLASHING SOUND COMES FROM THE BOTTLE OF ALCOHOL WHICH EZRA HAD PUT IN THE SPOT WHERE ITS STOMACH HAD BEEN..

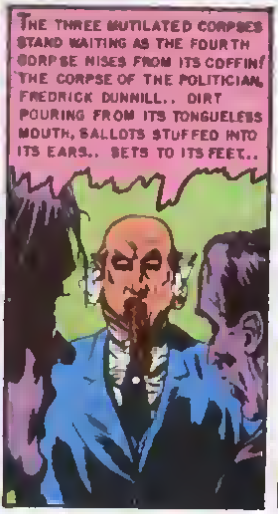

IT STANDS OVER THE OTHER THREE COFFINS! IT SEEMS TO BE CALLING THE OCCUPANTS


THE CORPSE OF HORACE STREETWALL RISES SLOWLY! IT SITS UP IN ITS COFFIN! THE PENNIES IN THE SKULL WHERE THE BRAINS SHOULD BE TINKLE AGAINST EACH OTHER! 'MONEY ON HIS MIND,' EZRA HAD SAID ... AND PUT IT THERE...


THE CORPSE OF BANKER STREETWALL GETS SHAKILY TO ITS FEET! A SACK OF PENNIES SWINGS WHERE ITS HEART HAD BEEN... CLINKING AGAINST ITS RIBS...


THE BANKER'S CORPSE STANDS BESIDE THE DOCTOR'S WAITING..


THEN THE CORPSE OF DENTIST JOHN BRIDGEMAN RISES FROM ITS CASKET! IT GRINS A TOOTHLESS GRIN, SHOWING WHERE EZRA DEEPLEY HAD REMOVED ALL OF ITS TEETH! ITS EYES ARE GONE . TORN FROM THEIR SOCKETS! 'NOW, DENTIST BRIDGEMAN HAS *TWO CAVITIES* IN HIS FACE', EZRA HAD SAID...


THE THREE MUTILATED CORPSES STAND WAITING AS THE FOURTH CORPSE RISES FROM ITS COFFIN! THE CORPSE OF THE POLITICIAN, FREDRICK DUNNILL.. DIRT POURING FROM ITS TONGUELESS MOUTH, SAILOTS STUFFED INTO ITS EARS.. SETS TO ITS FEET..


THE COLD MOON SHINES ON THE SNOW-COVERED COUNTRYSIDE! IT ILLUMINATES AN EERIE SIGHT! FOUR DISFIGURED, VIOLATED CORPSES MOVE SLOWLY... STEADILY ... DOWN THE ROAD. .TO THE MORTUARY .


MANY TOWNSPEOPLE ARE AWAKENED THAT NIGHT BY THE HYSTERICAL SCREAMING AND SHRIEKING THAT COMES FROM EZRA DEEPLEY'S HOUSE! WHEN THEY INVESTIGATE, THE NEXT MORNING...
PLACE IS A SHAMBLES!
LOOKS LIKE THERE'D BEEN A GOOD FIGHT HERE! BUT WHERE'S EZRA DEEPLEY? THERE'S NO TRACE OF HIM!
GLEN BODKIN, THE GENETERY CARETAKER, RUSHES INTO THE MORTUARY! HE IS PALE...HIS EYES WIDE IN TERROR...
COME QUICKLY! I...I FOUND HIM! I MEAN...WHAT'D LEFT OF HIM!
WHERE, GLEN? WHAT HAPPENED?
GLEN HAD LOOKED IN EZRA'S MAUSOLEUM! HE HAD NOTICED THERE WERE FIVE, NOT FOUR, COFFINS! HE HAD FOUND EZRA IN THE FIFTH...
WHAT ARE THOSE OTHER COFFINS DOING HERE?
GROUND'S BEEN FROZEN! COULDN'T BURY 'EM! BUT LOOK WHAT EZRA'D DONE TO THE BODIES INSIDE!
THE MEN LOOKED! THEY OPENED EACH COFFIN! THE DENTIST WITH HIS TEETH PULLED OUT, CAVITIES FOR EYES! THE BANKER WITH PENNIES IN HIS SKULL INSTEAD OF BRAINS... THE OTHERS...
MAD, I SAY! EZRA DEEPLEY MUST HAVE BEEN MAD!
THAT'S NOTHING! HERE! HE'S IN THIS ONE...
THE MEN CROWDED ABOUT AS GLEN OPENED THE FIFTH COFFIN... EZRA'S...
GOOD LORD!
OUGH-H!
GULP!
HOW...HOW HORRIBLE! BUT HOW, WHO DO YOU SUPPOSE DID THIS TO HIM!
MAYBE...MAYBE THEY DID...IN REVENGE!
HEE, HEE! WELL? LIKE IT? FEEL A LITTLE SICK? REMEMBER THE OLD SAYING...HE WHO LAUGHS LAST LAUGHS BEST? WELL...IN EZRA'S CASE, NOBODY LAUGHED! WANT TO KNOW WHAT THEY DID TO EZRA? WHAT'S THE MOST HORRIBLE THING YOU CAN THINK OF? HEE, HEE! THAT'S IT! READY FOR MORE? THEN I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE VAULT-KEEPER! B'BYE, NOW!
OH, BY THE WAY! LOOK FOR MY 'HAUNT OF FEAR' IN CRIME!

THE VAULT OF HORROR!




THEIR HEAVY, CLATTERING FOOTSTEPS ARE NEARER NOW! YOU TURN THE CORRER THE FAMILIAR CORNER ..
ONE MORE...BLOCK! ONE...GASP...MORE..
YOU HURL YOURSELF DOWN THE STONE STEPS..THE STEPS THAT YOU HAVE COME DOWN SO MARY TIMES...THE STEPS TO YOUR BASEMENT HOME...
THEY'LL NEVER FIND ME.. NOW! NEVER..
IT IS DARK! YOU LIE QUIETLY, SCARCELY BREATHING! YOU CAN HEAR THEIR CLUMSY FOOTSTEPS RUNNING BY IN THE STREET ABOVE ...THEIR ANGRY SHOUTING...
HE'S TURNED IN SOMEWHERE!
WE'LL GET 'IM, THE FIEND!
YOU FEEL WARM...SAFE NOW! YOU'RE HOME...BACK WHERE YOU BELONG! THEY CAN'T HARM YOU HERE! YOU RELAX! YOU STRETCH OUT COMFORTABLY AND RELAX! A MILLION THOUGHTS RACE WILDLY THROUGH YOUR MIND! A MILLION THOUGHTS RACE BACK... BACK TO THE BEGINNING...TO WHEN YOU FIRST MET HER...
SHE STOOD THERE IN THE LIGHT OF THE LAMP ...SWEETLY...DEMURELY! HER EYES FLASHED WITH A FIRE...A STRANGE MYSTERIOUS FIRE! YOU MOVED TOWARD HER... AS IF DRAWN BY SOME INVISIBLE THREAD...
HMMPH! THERE'S NOTHING AS LONELY AS A STRANGE TOWN! NO ONE TO TALK TO! NO FRIENDS! I...SAY... THAT GIRL... SHE'S SMILING AT ME!
I...I'M A STRANGER IN TOWN! I JUST GOT IN TONIGHT! YOU
I KNOW! I WATCHED YOU GET OFF THE TRAIN!
SHE WAS BEAUTIFUL! YES...YOU CAN REMEMBER THAT! SHE LOOKED INTO YOUR EYES AND YOUR HEART POUNDED IN YOUR CHEST! HER LIPS WERE FULL AND RED! WHEN SHE SPOKE, THEY TOUCHED AND SEEMED TO CLING FOR A MOMENT, RELUCTANT TO BE PARTED ONCE MORE...
YOU...YOU'LL BE LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO STAY?
WELL, AS A MATTER OF FACT... I DO NEED A ROOM!
SHE TOOK YOU BY THE HAND! HER JET BLACK HAIR SHIMMERED AS A BREEZE LAZILY CARESSED IT! YOU WENT WITH HER! YOU COULD NOT RESIST HER...
I LIVE...DOWN YONDER!
BUT...I CAN'T...MOVE IN ON YOU! I...

MILLIONS OF LITTLE THOUGHTS *RACE* THROUGH YOUR MIND' YOU LIE THERE.. AND THINK' BUT YOU CAN'T SEEM TO REMEMBER CLEARLY' YOU OBJECTED' YOU REMEMBER THAT' YOU DION'T WANT TO IMPOSE' SHE SHOOK HER HEAD' SHE PRESSED CLOSE TO YOU... HER FULL RED LIPS SO NEAR...SO NEAR...

I...I...

KISS ME'

WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THAT? THERE'S WHERE THE BLANKS BEGIN' THOSE PAUSES.. THOSE DARK PLACES IN YOUR LIFE OF THOUGHTS BESAN THENE' YOU CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED THE REST OF THAT NIGHT OR THE WHOLE NEXT DAY' BUT THE FOLLOWING NIGHT, YOU AWOKE TO FIND..

YOU' BUT..I.. MUST HAVE SLEPT'

I STAYED AN EXTRA DAY .. FOR YOU'

YOU FELT WEAK' YOU TRIED TO RISE' SHE BENT AND KISSED YOU' SHE TOUCHED YOUR EYELIDS GENTLY..

SLEEP SLEEP, MY DEAR' TOMORROW YOU WILL FEEL *STRONGER*' TOMORROW YOU WILL BE.. *READY*' AND I... I... WILL BE *GONE*'

AGAIN YOU SLEPT.. A DEAD, DREAMLESS SLEEP' WHEN YOU AWOKE IT WAS NIGHT AGAIN' ANOTHER DAY HAD COME AND GONE' AND SHE...THE DARK GIRL WITH THE FIERY EYES...

SHE.. SHE'S GONE, *TOO*'

YOU LOOKED ABOUT' IT WAS A DARK, DISMAL PLACE SHE HAD TAKEN YOU TO' TWO DAYS...TWO WHOLE DAYS YOU HAD SLEPT' WHAT HAD SHE *DONE* TO YOU? YOU WENT OUT...UP THE STONE STEPS TO THE STREET..

GOT TO *FIND* HER' GOT.. TO..

YOU SEARCHED EVERYWHERE' YOU LOOKED IN BARS, BACK ROOMS, NIGHT CLUBS, JUKE-BOX JOINTS.

NAAH' I AIN'T SEEN ANY BROAD FITTIN' *THAT* DESCRIPTION' BUT I'D CERTAINLY *LIKE* TO.

THANKS, ANYWAY'

YOU WENT ON.. ON' A HATRED GREW WITHIN YOU' AS THE NIGHT DRAGGED ON IT INFECTED..FESTERED' SHE'D *DRUGGED* YOU.. ROBBED YOU' YOU HATED HER... *HATED* HER' SUDDENLY.

THENE *THERE* SHE IS'


YOU RAN TO HER! YOU WENE HOT...HOT WITH RAGE! AND THE OTHEN FEELING, ..TNE STHANGE FEELING ...THE CNAVING WAS STRONG, TOO! A CNAVING FOR.. FOR SOMETHING! BUT YOU KHEW NOT WHAT...
I... I'VE BEEH LOOKING FOR YOU!
WHA...? I... WHO ARE YOU?
ANOTHEN BLANK SPOT! THEY BECOME MORE FREQUENT NOW! WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT DID YOU DO TO HEN? TNE HEXT THING YOU CAN NEMEMBEN IS STANDING OVER HEN... LOOKING DOWN! BUT HEN FACE...HEN FACE HAD CHANGED! YOU WERE NO LONGEN ANGNY.. AND THE CNAVING WAS GONE..
BUT...IT... IT ISN'T HER! IT...IT'S SOME ONE ELSE! AND SHE'S.. DEAD!
YOU HAD MADE A MISTAKE! A HORNIBLE MISTAKE! YOU HAD KILLED THE WRONG GIRL! YOU RAN, TERRIFIED, FNOM THE SCENE! YOU RAN UNTIL YOU COULD NUN NO MONE! THEN, YOU CAME TO THEM! YOU WENE GASPING FON BHEATH! YOU WENE TINED, AND THEY WERE BEFORE YOU...THE STEPS...
THE PLACE WHERE I SLEPT LAST NIGHT!
YOU NEMEMBER THE SKY GETTING LIGHT WITH THE COMING DAWN! YOU WENT DOWH THE STEPS! YOU WENT INSIDE! AND THEN, THERE'S AROTHER OF THOSE DANK PLACES! PENHAPS YOU SLEPT AGAIN! PERHAPS NOT! TNE HEXT THING YOU CAH HEMEMBEN IS THE FLASHING LIGHTS...TNE THEATEN MAHQUEE...
A MOVIE! I HAVEN'T SEEN A MOVIE IN AGES.
YOU STEPPED UP TO THE BOX OFFICE YOU NEACHED INTO YOUH POCKET! YOU HAD FONGOTTEH! SHE HAD TAKEH YOUN MONEY! YOU STOOD THENE... FNUSTNATED... ANGRY...
PLEASE STEP AWAY FNOM THE WIHDOW! NEXT...PLEASE!
THEN YOU SAW HER! SHE WAS COMING OUT OF THE MOVIE! SHE HAD SEEN THE PICTUNE! SHE'D SEEN IT.. WITH YOUR MONEY...
GOT TO FOLLOW HEN! TOO CROWDED AROUND HEHE!
YOU TRAILED HER! THE HAGE WITHIN YOU WAS A NOARING STORM WHEN SHE FINALLY TUNHED INTO A DESENTED STNEET! AHD THAT CNAVING... THAT STRANGE CRAVING
DID YOU ENJOY THE... MOVIE?
LET GO OF ME... YOU'HE... HURTING...

ANOTHER BLANK! ANOTHER SPACE OF TIME YOU CAN'T REMEMBER! AS YOU LIE THERE QUIETLY... LISTENING.. YOU TRY TO RECALL! BUT YOU CANNOT! THE NEXT THING YOU CAN REMEMBER IS STANDING OVER HER... NOT ANGRY... NOT CRAVING... JUST *TIRED*...

GOOD LORD! I'VE MADE ANOTHER... *MISTAKE!*

YES! YOU REMEMBER *THAT!* THE WRONG WOMAN... *AGAIN!* YOU TURNED! A CAR WAS COMING ALONG THE STREET! YOU FLED DOWN A BLACK ALLEY...

GOT TO GET AWAY! GOT TO RUN! I... I'M A *MURDERER!* SHE'S *DONE* SOMETHING TO ME... DRIVEN ME... *OUT OF MY MIND!*

YOU RAN! YOU RAN UNTIL YOU HAD NO MORE STRENGTH IN YOUR LEGS! AND THEN YOU WERE THERE... THERE, WHERE THE STEPS WENT DOWN...

TIRED... SLEEPY... WANT TO... REST...

ANOTHER OF THOSE MEMORY BLANKS! YOU MUST HAVE SLEPT AGAIN! IT WAS NIGHT ONCE MORE WHEN YOU CAME TO...

EXTRA... EXTRA... READ ALL ABOUT IT!

HERE, BOY...

YOU REACHED INTO YOUR POCKET! THE MONEY... YOU'D FORGOTTEN! YOU STARED AT THE HEADLINES... STUTTERING...

I... I MUST HAVE FORGOTTEN MY WALLET... I...

YEAH! SURE! HERE! TAKE IT! PAY ME BACK!

YOU TOOK THE PAPER! THE BOY LOOKED AT YOU WITH CONTEMPT, BUT YOU TOOK IT ANYWAY! THE HEADLINES ...THE HEADLINES HAD CAUGHT YOUR EYE...

'TWO UNEXPLAINED DEATHS IN TWO NIGHTS. TWO YOUNG WOMEN FOUND DEAD ON TWO SUCCESSIVE NIGHTS! CAUSES OF DEATH NOT YET DETERMINED! SUSPECT MURDER!'

YOU CRUSHED THE PAPER INTO A CRINKLED BALL AND FLUNG IT TO THE GROUND! IT CALLED *YOU* A *DANGEROUS KILLER*...

I... I'LL GIVE MYSELF UP... *AFTER* I GET *HER!*

ONCE AGAIN YOU STALKED THE TOWN... SEARCHING FOR THEM, YOU SAW *HER*! ONLY THIS TIME YOU HAD TO BE *SURE*! YOU STOLE UP BEHIND HER AND...

A-GGGGH!

IT *IS* YOU THIS TIME! I'M *SURE*! I'VE HAD A GOOD LOOK!

ANOTHER STORM OF ANGER AND THAT STRANGE CRAVING! A BLANK.. AND THEN IT WAS OVER! THE CRAVING WAS SATISFIED! YOU WIPED YOUR MOIST FACE...

NOW.. NOW I'LL GIVE MYSELF UP! I'VE... I'VE.. OH, LORD... *NO*!

AGAIN! *AGAIN YOU KILLED THE WRONG GIRL*! THEY ALL LOOKED ALIKE TO YOU *BEFORE*.. THEY ALL LOOKED LIKE *HER*! BUT AFTER...

I... I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!

SMOKE

YOU REMEMBER IT WELL NOW! THAT WAS LAST NIGHT. AS YOU LIE THERE IN THE DARKNESS, SAFE FROM YOUR PURSUERS, YOU TRY TO REMEMBER TONIGHT... WHAT HAPPENED! YOU HAD FOUND YOURSELF WALKING... WALKING..

CROWD AROUND RADIO STORE! THINK I'LL MOSEY OVER AND LISTEN!

THE ROUND EXPRESSIONLESS FACE OF THE LOUDSPEAKER OVER THE DOORWAY TO THE RADIO STORE RASPED IN AN EAR-SPLITTING CRY..

...AND LAST NIGHT THE KILLER'S THIRD VICTIM WAS DISCOVERED IN AN EMPTY LOT! AN AUTOPSY SHOWED THAT SHE TOO DIED IN THE SAME MANNER AS THE PREVIOUS TWO VICTIMS.

THE VOICE COMING FROM THE LOUDSPEAKER CONTINUED! IT RAMBLED ON ABOUT THE MURDERS! YOU STUDIED THE FACES AROUND YOU! THEN YOU SAW HER...

IT'S HER!

THIS TIME IT *IS* HER!

DOCTOR ALEX FARRSWORTH HAS DECLARED THAT THERE IS NO FOUNDATION FOR THIS THEORY! HOWEVER...

YOU HID BEHIND A FAT MAN AND WATCHED! SHE WAS LISTENING INTENTLY TO THE SORT DETAILS! FINALLY, SHE LEFT! YOU FOLLOWED HER! YOU HAD A FAINT SUSPICION THAT AFTER IT WOULD BE OVER... AFTER THAT STRANGE CRAVING WAS SATISFIED..SHE'D BE SOMEONE ELSE! YET YOU FOLLOWED HER! YOU MUST HAVE MADE A SLIGHT NOISE, FOR SHE TURNED AND

EEEYAAAAA

MUSIC

THEY HAD HEARD HER SCREAM! THEY CAME RUNNING! YOU HAD HAD TO RUN... TO ESCAPE! NOW, YOU ARE LYING IN THE DARK... AND YOU CAN HEAR THEIR FOOTSTEPS IN THE STREET ABOVE...

WHAT WAS THAT THE MAN ON THE RADIO SAID... ABOUT THE VICTIMS' *BLOOD* BEING *DRAINED* FROM THEIR *BODIES*?

"*THE WORK OF A VAMPIRE!*" THE RADIO HAD BLARED! YOU LOOK AROUND! A *VAMPIRE*? IS THAT WHAT YOU ARE? THE LIGHT OF DAWN IS BEGINNING TO STREAM IN THE CELLAR WINDOW...

GOOD LORD! I... I'M LYING IN A *COFFIN!*

YOU TRY TO GET UP! THE HEAVY FOOTFALLS... COMING DOWN THE STONE STEPS...

THEY... *FOLLOWED* ME... TO MY *RESTING PLACE!*

THE DOOR... THE POUNDING... SMASHING... SPLINTERING...

SHE DID IT! SHE *MADE* ME A VAMPIRE! THAT *GIRL*... *THAT NIGHT*...

THEY RUSH AT YOU! YOU LIE BACK IN YOUR COFFIN, CRINGING! THEY STARE DOWN AT YOU... THEIR OUTRAGED EYES SHINING IN THE TORCH LIGHT...

SOMEONE... GIMME THE *STAKE*...

THE FAT-FACED FLABBY ONE LEANS OVER YOU! YOU CANNOT RISE! THE CRAVING... THE CRAVING FOR BLOOD WENT UNSATISFIED TONIGHT! YOU ARE *WEAK!* YOU CANNOT PUSH THE *STAKE* ASIDE AS HE PLACES THE POINT UPON YOUR CHEST! WHEN HE TAKES THE IRON MALLET AND LIFTS IT HIGH, YOU OPEN YOUR MOUTH... AND AS THE MALLET FALLS *YOU SCREAM*

AAAAAAA

YOU'LL REMEMBER THE END... THE TEARING OF FLESH... THE CRUNCHING OF BONE... THE EXCRUCIATING PAIN AS THE STAKE DIGS INTO YOUR THROBBING HEART! AND LASTLY *SHE*... THERE IN THE CROWD... SMILING AT YOU. THEN LAUGHING, *LAUGHING*. AND HER LAUGHTER WILL FOLLOW YOU INTO THE BLACKNESS!

HA HA HA HA HA HA

THE END

HEH, HEH! WELL, THAT'S MY TALE, FIENDS! AND A *PIERCING FINISH* IT HAD, TOO! I HOPE YOU ENJOYED YOURSELF... BEING A *VAMPIRE*... EVEN IF YOU DID MAKE A FEW MISTAKES! ON WELL, IN THE END, *THEY* DIDN'T *MIS-STAKE YOU!* THEY DID A REAL *THOROUGH* JOB! RIGHT *TH-R-OUGH!*



President and CEO—Stephen A. Geppi

Publisher—Russ Cochran

Dear OW,

My name is Tony Lewandowski. I am 12 years old. I have a lot of your mags. Here is a reprint picture of you from HAUNT 4. I'm your #1 fan. Bye now and sweet nightmares.

[or] I m your #1 fan by now. And sweet nightmares.

Tony Lewandowski — Oak Forest, IL

So, Tony, I couldn't easily read the last sentence of your letter but I'm thinking it's one of the two versions I printed above.

Oh, no, Tony! I'm not going to run that picture! I don't take a good picture. My hair was a mess. I look too fat! I look too old! I had my eye shut (No, the other one)!

—OW

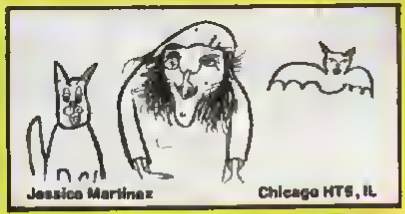
Dear Russ,

Thanks for another great set of stories here in HAUNT #5! I really enjoy these old stories. I wasn't around the first time these comics came out, though I have heard much of them in the years since I started reading comics. The historical significance of these comics is rather important to me. Inasmuch as these were featured in the testimony before Congress so much as well as Bill Gaines' testimony. Thanks for putting these stories out for the younger folks to read. It's good for them to see stories with a real literary slant to them, and not just fright fests from cover to cover. Until next time.

Carl Pietrantonio — Laredo, TX

Still and all, Carl, I like a little fright from time to time, myself!

—OW



Jessica Martinez — Chicago HTS, IL

Last issue, I printed a letter from Jessica. She sent me a little drawing of me, but I didn't have room for it then. Here it is now, and I'm proud to devote an inch of my Niche to Jessica!

—OW

Dear Russ,

I wrote to you when I was in the fourth and fifth grade. Now I'm in the sixth grade, and I'm still writing to you. You never did answer any of my letters, all I got back was some pages out of some comic books. The only thing I ever got from you that I wanted was a catalog. If you read this letter, PLEASE ANSWER IT!!! If you send me anything, please don't let it be a newsletter. I hate those things! The first time I wrote to you, I was reading VAULT and it said that if I wrote to you I would get a free real picture of the Vault-Keeper. This is about the fourth time I wrote to you and I still don't have a picture!!! You COULD write at least five lines.

Dwayne L. Heath — Detroit, MI

Aw, Dwayne! Have a heart, sweetie! We love you, in our warped way, and have run a letter from you in W FAN 3 and another in CRYPT 5, and the notorious 'Dangerbread Man' drawing you did in FINE ARTS #5 (which ran in W FAN 5 and 2FIST 5); but without a street address on your letters we here in GhouLunatic Central couldn't let you know! I see your address has been taped to THIS letter, so I can get in touch with you this time. But, repeat after me, FEARfolk: "I will put my address on my letters (and drawings)." Remember, we won't PRINT your address without your okay.

Secondly, I'll take this opportunity for my annual reminder that the original 1950s offer of actual GhouLunatic Photos was mentioned at the end of a few of the stories reprinted in the defunct 84-pg reprint comics of a few years ago and not edited out. We meant to do NEW photos in the future, but the future hasn't got here yet. We'll be in touch.

—OW

Dear OW,

I just happily finished this month's EC selection, and was browsing through Overstreet trying to figure out why INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION is worth more than WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY, when I encountered an entry which caused me to look back at the comics I had just finished.

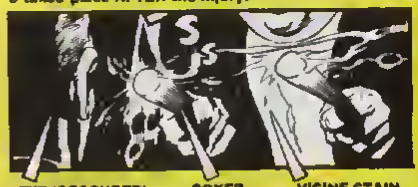
HAUNT OF FEAR...5 - injury to eye panel pg 4

Being the completist I am, I looked at page 4 (and 3 and 2 and 1) of your HAUNT OF FEAR 5, no injury to eye panel! Now, I really am not an absolutist on admiring injury to eye panels, but I do have one question. Who screwed up, you or Overstreet?

Bob La Tremouille
875 Massachusetts AV #31 — Cambridge, MA 02139

Injury to eye panels are one of my obsessions, as you can well see (bef I can't!). My latest Overstreet "Price Guide" is from 1987, and it doesn't mention any injury panels in HAUNT. This must be a later addendum.

Now, you legal-types out there tell me, what constitutes an official injury panel? Below is the detail from HAUNT 5, page 12 (page 4 of 2nd story, "Horror in the Freak Tent!"), panel E. Not being a 3D comic, it's hard to judge, but the white-hot poker is several inches away from the victim's eye. Panel 5 takes place AFTER the injury.



EYE (OBSCURED) — POKER — VISINE STAIN

Either way, it was an eye-ful thing to happen! That guy was out of luck, for sure!

—OW

Dear Old Witch, Mistress of the Haunt of Fear,

I really like your magazine. I also like CRIME, SHOCK, VAULT, W SCI, and CRYPT, but yours is the best. The first HAUNT I read was #3, and the best story was "Nightmare!" I also like the story you did in CRIME #4. But I am a newcomer to EC so I have a few questions, like

1) Who is Brocketmouth/boy/Ed?

2) Is Dr. deRange a GhouLunatic?

3) On the TV show of CRYPT, I saw "Dig That Cat...He's Real Gone!" When will that comic be in your magazine?

4) Random House Publishers put out a CRYPT book. It shows pictures from the comic books. Is this "official"?

When I started reading EC Comics, my sister joined in, then my Dad, now my Grandma! Keep up the good work! I hope this gets into HAUNT. Hauntingly Yours

Peter Hayes — Santa Clara, CA

By the numbers:

1) Turn to page one of this comic. Look at the first panel. See the character at the bottom (No, the other one, the one with the long upper lip. THAT's the one!)? That's Ed Anon, our pencil-sharpening, word-processing, errand-running factotumoid! I live in the Haunt of Fear, near the Crypt of Terror and the Vault of Horror; he lives right next door in the Urn at Surial. (Oh, I do not! —Ed)

2) Doctor Homer ("Dreamy") deRange, esteemed French-extraction para-scientist, and guru of our SF titles (WEIRD SCIENCE, WEIRD FANTASY and WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY; clever with words, these science-people!) letter columns, is not officially a GhouLunatic. He is here while on sabbatical from Marnison College, where he is head of the Necroepistolary Department. (Confidentially, I have a crush on him. And he has the bruises to prove it!)

3) "Dig..." will be in HAUNT 21. Which no one has reprinted before so you'll just have to wait (Hee-hee!).

4) Random House's "Crypt" books are indeed official, and geared for the younger set. They feature original panels and NEW art by that big tall drink of country crick water, Jack Davis.

5) Whoops! You didn't have a number 5!

Glad to hear EC is multigenerational at your house, Peter. 'Home is where the HAUNT is!' —OW



NEXT ISSUE

This month: WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY #5 and CRIME #5. Next month: The 7th issues of CRYPT, WEIRD SCIENCE and SHOCK. Don't forget VAULT, WEIRD FANTASY and TWO-FISTED! Get them at your local comic book shop or SUBSCRIBE (see our ad in this comic for details)!

BACK ISSUES: CRYPT #1, $3 each (subject to availability). All others up thru issue #3, $1.50 each; issues #4 and up, $3 each. Add $0 per order ($10 outside US) to: S&H

We want letters! Write to:
HAUNT
RUSS COCHRAN
POB 469
WEST PLAINS MO 65775

THIS COMIC REPRINTS
HAUNT OF FEAR #5 (MAD/APA 1951)

COVER by Johnny Craig

A Strange Undertaking	Graham Ingels
So They Finally Pinned You Down!	Wally Wood
A Grave Gag!	Jack Kamen
Cheese, That's Horrible!	Jack Davis

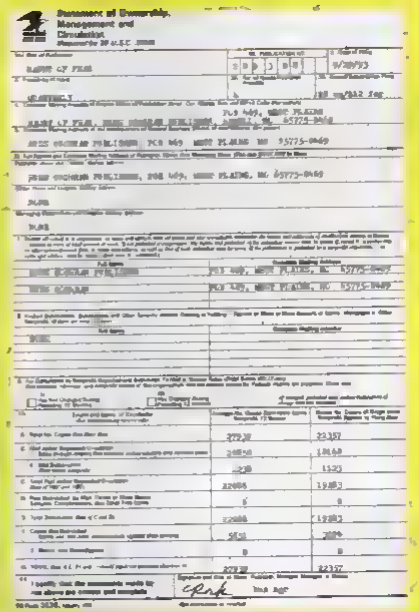
We maintain letters of published. We cannot promise to acknowledge, publish or answer letters. We edit for clarity, accuracy and length. We automatically withhold street address and zip code unless you clearly state you wish them published. We attempt to acknowledge publication of letters, so let us we need your address on the individual letter.

THE OLD WITCH'S CARTOON CAULDRON

The Crypt-Keeper thot he pulled a fast one on me in my last issue, stealing a bit of my lettercolumn for an excerpt from his FINE ART page! But Ol' Bow-Legs didn't get away with it (Someone SNITCHED on you, Crypto! Not mentioning any names, but his initials are VK!). Just to get even, I sneaked over to the Crypt and SPIRITED away these GHOSTLY GRAPHICS to share with you, my little FEARfans! —OW



All theen HAUNTnd HORRORS are by William Pearson, Rutland, VT. —OW





FAN CLUB NEWS #1

PRESENTED BY THE VAULT-KEEPER

We're not an actual CLUB (more like a BAT; vampire, that is!), but here we exchange thots and info on our favorite subject...MAD! Er, I mean, EC!! —VK

Dear Russ,

I'd like to start off by saying I'll try to keep this one short, but it's hard to. I love writing you and EC fans.

Back in 1974 when East Coast Comix was [doing EC] reprints were there more than twelve comics in the East Coast set? In reprint #12 it said East Coast was going to print another six issues and would continue to reprint more ill things work out with the sales of them. As far as I know there were twelve. While we're on the East Coast subject I would also like to know if you might have or know where I might be able to obtain some of the merchandise that was advertised in the East Coast reprints which were: the EC cover postare (CRYPT #38 and VAULT #32); the hard cover 'EC Horror Library,' the EC Portfolios, the SQUA TRONT magazines, MONSTER TIMES #10 and the 1972 EC convention book [EC LIVES!]. Was there ever a title from EC called TALES FROM SPACE?

Robert Borruso — Staten Island, NY

Yep! An even dozen issues from East Coast Comix, Inc., during the 70s. The indicia listed the series as "E C. Classic Reprint." Without that little walk in the sun, we might have forgotten how to ambulate! East Coast solicited for subscriptions of 6-issue spans, thus the "print another six issues" concept you inferred from their final issue. They did announce the contents of the projected #13 (WEIRD FANTASY #9) and maybe advertised it, I forget.

We have certain issues from that series available for sale!! See the listing below. For completeness' sake, I list here the contents of the balance of the line.

#1, CRYPT OF TERROR #1 (TALES FROM THE CRYPT #46), #2, WEIRD SCIENCE #18 (1952), #3, SHOCK #6.

We DO NOT have copies of the above listing available for sale! Check the box BELOW for that!

Who can help Robert locate copies of the other EC goodies he wants?

I can't think of a TALES FROM SPACE from anyone, let alone EC, not even an Annual or a Canadian reprint. (I did discover a Canadian reprint of CRIME thinu WEIRD SUSPENSTORIES, tho; neat, huh?) —VK

$15 each:

#3 (SHOCK #12)
#5 (WEIRD FANTASY #13, 1952)
#7 (VAULT #26)
#18 (HAUNT #23)
#4 (HAUNT #12)
#6 (CRIME #25)
#8 (TWO-FISTED #34)

$10 each:

#11 (WEIRD SCIENCE "#12", actually #1 from 1950)
#12 (SHOCK #2)

When ordering please identify as EAST COAST #?? (for example, EAST COAST #3). Add $5 per order S&H ($10 outside US).

Dear EC,

I would like to be a part of a great fan club. It would be something very special to me. I've been reading EC's since the 70s, when the old MADs were reprinted in MAD SPECIALs. I wish that I still had them but unfortunately they are gone. I now have an old hardcover, "The Ridiculously Expensive MAD," that reprints the superhero parodies from the 50s MAD.

I became aware of the horror stuff from FAMOUS MONSTERS ads. I then read about them in, of all things, Stephen King books. "Danse Macabre" and "The Bogeyman" from "Night Shift" gave descriptions of stories drawn by Graham Ingels and Jack Davis. The King movie, "Creepshow," of course, was an EC horror comic-influenced production.

Then came the HBO TV show version of CRYPT that definitely revived the interest to read EC comics. I like the way that Gladstone put the 64-page books out. CRYPT backed with CRIME, VAULT with HAUNT, WEIRD SCIENCE/FANTASY, etc. The problem was that they weren't well printed. The colors were sort of faded and the type wasn't very clear. Still, they were a great way to be introduced to the comics.

The Cochran [64-page] reprints of the following year were somewhat better than the Gladstone ones. But they didn't feature the covers for the second bonus issue inside. That was corrected by the 5th and 6th issues though, and the color, type, and printing in general were very well done. A marvelous improvement. Although the premiere issue of CRYPT was done as an awful yet collectible blow up edition.

The third time around is fantastic in that you can see them chronologically done.

My favorite artists are Wally Wood, Jack Davis, Al Williamson and Johnny Craig. My favorite tales are "Radioactive Child!" by Harvey Kurtzman, "Ambush!" by Davis and "Flying Machine" by B. Krigstein.

Some of these people are no longer with us now, but their work lives on in these incredible reprints. I don't know if you have any info on some of the other books like IMPACT or SADDLE JUSTICE. Like, who drew the issues, the main staff, who wrote what? Krigstein wrote and drew the IMPACT story "Master Race" and Jack Kamen drew most of the PSYCHOANALYSIS yarns. Any more details and facts would be fine. Maybe a reader would like to write to me and tell me in.

I am interested in an old book titled "EC Horror Library" dated 1973. It featured various stories from the ECs. And are the SQUA TRONT fanzines still available?

William Pearson — Rutland, VT

Whoa! I LIKED the tabloid-sized XL CRYPT #1 ($6+ S&H as listed in the EAST COAST info, this page)! Even tho I didn't get my shot at the BIG TIME (that was the only issue)!

Russ Cochran has reprinted New Direction in hardback, and hardback Pre-Trends like SADDLE JUSTICE are in the works. A quick correction: Al Feldstein wrote (and had lettered!) a 5-pg "Master Race," Krigstein expanded it to an 8-pger, Kamen did all (4) issues of PSYCHOANALYSIS.

Write to this department like so: FAN CLUB NEWS, RUSS COCHRAN, POB 468, WEST PLAINS, MO 65775.

We welcome letters of comment. We cannot attempt to acknowledge, publish or answer letters. We edit for clarity, economy and length. We automatically withhold street address and zip code unless you clearly state you wish them published. We attempt to acknowledge publication of letters. So as we have your address on the individual letter.

The illustration is a re-dress of the one used for the text piece in CRYPT 21 (#5) in 1950, which did not run in our reprint of that issue.

HERE'S A DELIGHTFUL LITTLE TALE FOR YOUR AMUSEMENT! I CALL IT..

A GRAVE GAG!!



THE DOOR TO THE SMALL AMPHITHEATER OPENED, AND THE BLACK-CLAD MOURNERS FILED TIGHT-LIPPED DOWN THE AISLE. THE WOMEN, THEIR FACES VEILED IN FLIMSY BLACK RET... THE MEN, UNCOMFORTABLE IN THEIR STIFFLY STARCHED WHITE SHIRTS AND THEIR NEATLY PRESSED BLACK SUITS...

SOB... SOB...

BUT... WHY... WHY CREMATION?

SH-H-H! IT WAS HIRAM'S LAST REQUEST, SAMUEL!

FINALLY, THEY WERE ALL SEATED ON THE UNCOMFORTABLE STRAIGHT-BACKED SERGHES BEFORE THEM, THE COFFIN OF THE DECEASED RESTED DILERTLY ON THE TRACK OF ROLLERS THAT RAN TOWARD THE BLACK DOOR IN THE BRICK WALL!

IS THAT THE CREMATORIUM, GNAHHY?

CREMATORY, EZNA' YEB' AND SN-H-H-H'

THE FAMILY OF HIRAM WESTLAKE SAT STIFFLY, AS A MINISTER RECITED A SIMPLE SERVICE' HIRAM WESTLAKE HAD BEER ONE OF *FIVE* SNOTHERS' *FOUR* OF THEM HAD GOTTER MARRIED ARO RAISED LARGE FAMILIES' THE *FIFTH* REMAINED SINDLE' HIRAM HAD BEER THE *FIRST* TO DIE' AS THE MINISTER FINISHED HIS BERVICE ..

.. ARO WE NOW CONNIT THE LAST RENAINS OF OUR BELOVED HIRAM WESTLAKE TO THE COKSUMIRD FIRE' ASHES TO ASNES.. DUST TO..

THE COFFIN SLID SLOWLY DOWN THE ROLLER TRACK TOWARD THE SMALL DOOR THAT STOOD OPEN NOW' FROM WITHIN, BLASTING HEAT AND DANGING FLAMES LEAPED FORTH ..

.. FOREVER AND EVER..A-MEN'

THE HEAVY IRON DOOR CLANGED SHUT' THE MOURNERS SAT SILENTLY... HEADS BOWED' FROM BEHIND THE BRICK WALL, A RUSHING ROAR WAS HEARD.. THE ROAR OF THE CONSUMING FIRE..

THEN.. SUDDERLY.. THEY HEARD IT' ALL EYES TURNED TOWARD THE CREMATORY' IT CAME FROM BEHIND THE WALL.. A HORRIFIED, BLOOD-CURDLING, HYSTERICAL SCREAM.

EEEEAAAH!

WHAT THE..

THE FRIGHTENED WIDOW JUMPED TO HER FEET' THE BRIEF-STRICKEN MOTHER FAIRTED' THE THREE BROTHERS PRESENT LOOKED AT EACH OTHER WIDE-EYED IN DISBELIEF.

IT CAME.. FROM *INSIDE*..

HE.. HE'S *ALIVE*'

DO SOMETHING'

AND THEN BEFORE ARTONE COULD MOVE A FIGURE STEPPED FROM BEHIND THE DRAPERIES TO THE RIGHT OF THE WALL' IT WAS *JONAH WESTLAKE*... THE *FIFTH* BROTHER' HE WAS LAUGHING.. *LAUGHING GLEEFULLY*..

A.. HAH' *A.. HAH'* *HAH-HAH-HAH'* PRETTY GOOD.. EH?

YOU.. YOU *FIEND*'

HEE, HEE! YEP! THAT WAS *JONAH* WESTLAKE! THE BLACK-SHEEP OF THE WESTLAKE FAMILY! ALWAYS THE *COMEDIAN*.. ALWAYS THE *PRACTICAL JOKER!* SOME *JOKE*, EH? YES, JONAH *LOVED* TO PLAY *PRACTICAL JOKES* ON THE OTHER MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY! HE'D BEEN *DOING* IT FOR *YEARS!* BUT THIS.. *THIS* WAS GOING *TOO FAR*..

JONAH! HOW *COULD* YOU..

I *HATE* YOU!

LEAVE! *GO!* GET *OUT!* *IMMEDIATELY!*

SO JONAH LEFT! HE WAS BANISHED FROM THE FAMILY CIRCLE! HE WAS NEVER INVITED BACK AGAIN...

NO SENSE OF HUMOR! THAT'S WHAT'S WRONG! NOBODY'S GOT A *SENSE OF HUMOR!* HMMPH! CAN'T EVEN PLAY A PRACTICAL JOKE

AND SO THE TIME PASSED! JONAH REMAINED REJECTED FROM THE WESTLAKE FAMILY GROUP! WHEN SAMUEL WESTLAKE.. ONE OF THE BROTHERS.. PASSED AWAY, JONAH WASN'T EVEN INVITED TO THE FUNERAL...

HMMPH! *SOURPUSSES*..THE WHOLE BUNCH OF 'EM! NOT A SMILE IN A CARLOAD! WELL, I'LL SHOW 'EM! *I'LL SHOW 'EM!*

DAILY

SAMUEL WESTLAKE TO BE BURIED

THAT NIGHT, JONAH WESTLAKE ENTERED SAGMOOR CEMETERY! HE CARRIED A SUITCASE AND A COIL OF WIRE! HE MADE HIS WAY ACROSS THE GRAVES TO THE MAUSOLEUM MARKED..

'WESTLAKE'! AH! THIS IS IT! THEY'RE BURYIN' SAM IN THIS MAUSOLEUM TOMONROW! WELL, I'LL SHOW 'EM THE BUMCH OF OL' SOURPUSSES..

JONAH PUSHED OPEN THE MAUSOLEUM DOOR! AFTER A WHILE, HE CAME OUT...LAUGHING! THE NEXT DAY, THE WESTLAKE FAMILY MINUS JOKING JONAH...HAD GATHERED FOR THE INTENMENT OF THEIR BELOVED SAMUEL...

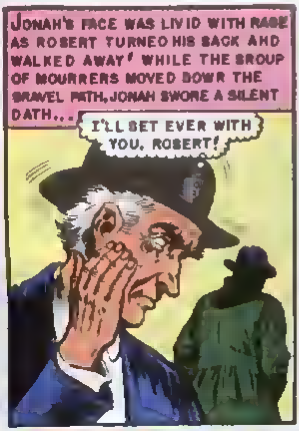
..AND SO, WE COMMIT HIS BODY TO ITS FINAL RESTING PLACE..

BROTHERS AND NEPHEWS LIFTED THE GASKET CONTAIMING THE LAST REMAINS OF SAMUEL WESTLAKE AND CARRIED IT INTO THE MAUSOLEUM! A MOMENT LATER, THEY CAME OUT! THEIR ARMS HUNG LIMPLY AT THEIR SIDES! THE MINISTER STEPPED FORWARD..

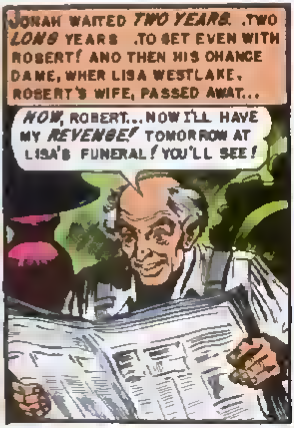
..AND NOW AS WE CLOSE THE DOOR

NO! *NO!* *DON'T LOCK ME IN..*

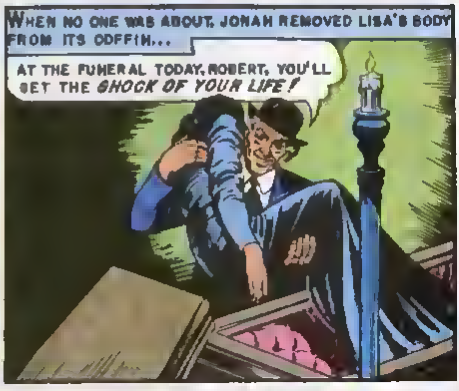

A VOICE! IT CAME FROM INSIDE THE MAUSOLEUM FROM THE COFFIN! IT WAS AN EERIE, PLEADING VOICE.
PLEASE.. I'M ALIVE! DON'T BURY ME ALIVE.. PLEASE!
WHAT THE?
HURRY! HURRY!
WHILE THE WIDOW SCREAMED HYSTERICALLY, THE OTHER BROTHERS RUSHED BACK INTO THE MAUSOLEUM.
OPEN THE COFFIN.. QUICKLY!
LET HIM OUT..
HURRY!
THE COFFIN WAS UNLATCHED AND OPENED! INSIDE SAMUEL WESTLAKE LAY PALE AND RIGID! HE WAS QUITE DEAD...
IT...IT'S SOME SORT OF.. JOKE
JONAH! HE'S DONE THIS
LAUGHTER FILLED THE MAUSOLEUM. IT ECHOED FROM WALL TO WALL. CEILING TO FLOOR! IT WAS JONAH'S MOCKING SNEERING LAUGHTER COMING FROM A LOUDSPEAKER!
LOOK!
JONAH, MICROPHONE IN HAND, WAS HANGING ON TO A TREE TO KEEP FROM FALLING. WHEN A MEMBER OF THE WESTLAKE FAMILY SPOTTED HIM! HE WAS LAUGHING SO HARD, TEARS STREAMED DOWN HIS CHEEKS..
HAW-HAW-HAW
THERE HE IS BEHIND THE MAUSOLEUM!
ONE OF THE BROTHERS - INDIGNANT - WALKED SLOWLY OVER TO WHERE JONAH STOOD GIGGLING UNCONTROLLABLY AS ROBERT APPROACHED, HE BEGAN TO REMOVE THE BLACK GLOVES HE WAS WEARING.
JONAH! YOU
HEE, HEE.. GASP A HEE-HEE..
PERVERTED, SAVAGE-BRAINED MONSTER! HAVE YOU NO PITY FOR SAM'S POOR WIDOW? DO YOU FIND SATISFACTION IN INFLICTING PAIN UPON YOUR KIN?" WORDS CANNOT DESCRIBE WHAT AN INHUMAN DESPICABLE HALF-WITTED IDIOT YOU ARE..
...AND THE GIGGLING WAS CUT SHORT BY THE STINGING LASH OF ROBERT'S GLOVES AS HE WHIPPED THEM ACROSS JONAH'S FACE

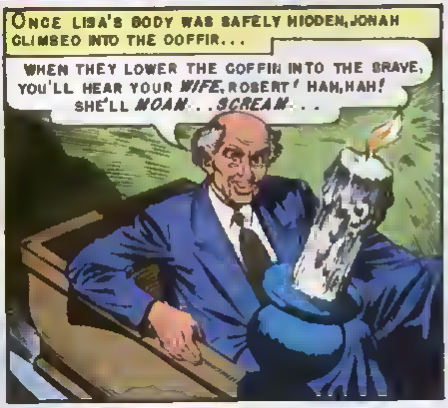

JONAH'S FACE WAS LIVID WITH RAGE AS ROBERT TURNED HIS BACK AND WALKED AWAY! WHILE THE GROUP OF MOURRERS MOVED DOWN THE GRAVEL PATH, JONAH SWORE A SILENT OATH...
I'LL GET EVEN WITH YOU, ROBERT!

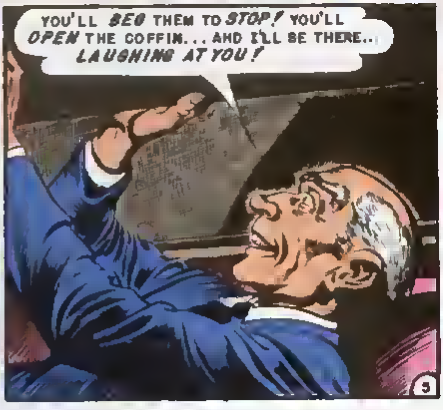

HE CLENCHED HIS FISTS TILL THE KNUCKLES WERE WHITE BLOTCHES..
I'LL GET EVEN WITH YOU FOR THIS!


JONAH WAITED TWO YEARS. .TWO LONG YEARS .TO GET EVEN WITH ROBERT! AND THEN HIS CHANCE CAME, WHEN LISA WESTLAKE, ROBERT'S WIFE, PASSED AWAY...
NOW, ROBERT...NOW I'LL HAVE MY REVENGE! TOMORROW AT LISA'S FUNERAL! YOU'LL SEE!

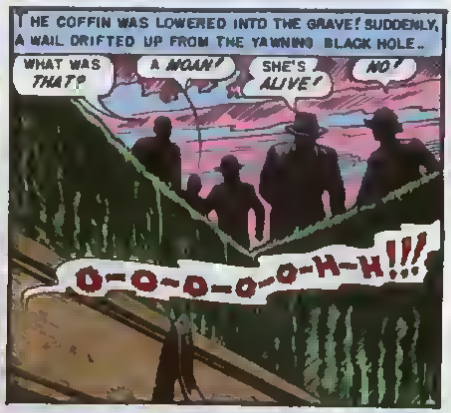

EARLY THE NEXT MORNING, JONAH SLIPPED INTO THE FUNERAL PARLOR WHERE LISA WESTLAKE'S BODY LAY IN ITS COFFIN! A PLAN HAD FORMED IN JONAH'S WARPED MIND...A FIENDISH PLAN...
THIS WILL BE MY BEST...MY GREATEST PRACTICAL JOKE!


WHEN NO ONE WAS ABOUT, JONAH REMOVED LISA'S BODY FROM ITS COFFIN...
AT THE FUNERAL TODAY, ROBERT, YOU'LL GET THE SHOCK OF YOUR LIFE!

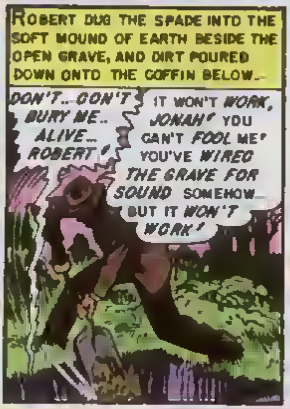

ONCE LISA'S BODY WAS SAFELY HIDDEN, JONAH CLIMBED INTO THE COFFIN...
WHEN THEY LOWER THE COFFIN INTO THE GRAVE, YOU'LL HEAR YOUR WIFE, ROBERT! HAH, HAH! SHE'LL MOAN...SCREAM...

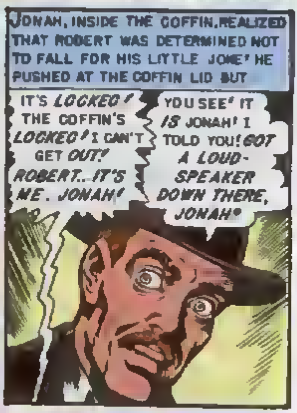

YOU'LL SEE THEM TO STOP! YOU'LL OPEN THE COFFIN... AND I'LL BE THERE.. LAUGHING AT YOU!

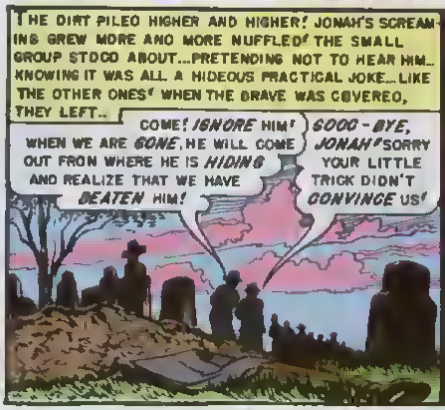

LATER THAT DAY, A SMALL SOBBING GROUP STOOD ABOUT THE COFFIN OF LISA WESTLAKE IN SAGMOOR CEMETERY! AFTER THE SIMPLE CEREMONY...
LOWER THE COFFIN!

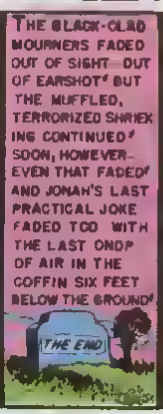

THE COFFIN WAS LOWERED INTO THE GRAVE! SUDDENLY, A WAIL DRIFTED UP FROM THE YAWNING BLACK HOLE..
WHAT WAS THAT?
A MOAN!
SHE'S ALIVE!
NO!
O-O-O-O-O-H-H!!!

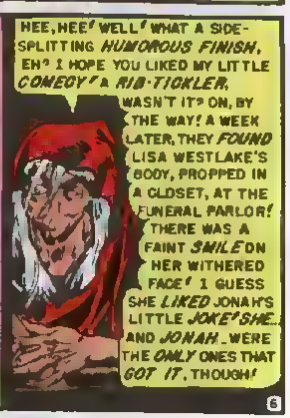

ROBERT STEPPED FORWARD! HE SNATCHED THE SHOVEL FROM A HORRIFIED GRAVEDIGGER..
BUT ..SHE'S ALIVE!
NO! IT'S A TRICK!


ROBERT DUG THE SPADE INTO THE SOFT MOUND OF EARTH BESIDE THE OPEN GRAVE, AND DIRT POURED DOWN ONTO THE COFFIN BELOW..
DON'T.. DON'T BURY ME.. ALIVE... ROBERT!
IT WON'T WORK, JONAH! YOU CAN'T FOOL ME! YOU'VE WIRED THE GRAVE FOR SOUND SOMEHOW... BUT IT WON'T WORK!


JONAH, INSIDE THE COFFIN, REALIZED THAT ROBERT WAS DETERMINED NOT TO FALL FOR HIS LITTLE JOKE! HE PUSHED AT THE COFFIN LID BUT
IT'S LOCKED! THE COFFIN'S LOCKED! I CAN'T GET OUT! ROBERT.. IT'S ME, JONAH!
YOU SEE! IT IS JONAH! I TOLD YOU! GOT A LOUD-SPEAKER DOWN THERE, JONAH!


THE DIRT PILED HIGHER AND HIGHER! JONAH'S SCREAMING GREW MORE AND MORE MUFFLED! THE SMALL GROUP STOOD ABOUT...PRETENDING NOT TO HEAR HIM... KNOWING IT WAS ALL A HIDEOUS PRACTICAL JOKE... LIKE THE OTHER ONES! WHEN THE GRAVE WAS COVERED, THEY LEFT..
COME! IGNORE HIM! WHEN WE ARE GONE, HE WILL COME OUT FROM WHERE HE IS HIDING AND REALIZE THAT WE HAVE BEATEN HIM!
GOOD-BYE, JONAH! SORRY YOUR LITTLE TRICK DIDN'T CONVINCE US!


THE BLACK-CLAD MOURNERS FADED OUT OF SIGHT OUT OF EARSHOT! BUT THE MUFFLED, TERRORIZED SHRIEKING CONTINUED! SOON, HOWEVER.. EVEN THAT FADED! AND JONAH'S LAST PRACTICAL JOKE FADED TOO WITH THE LAST DROP OF AIR IN THE COFFIN SIX FEET BELOW THE GROUND!
THE END


HEE, HEE! WELL! WHAT A SIDE-SPLITTING HUMOROUS FINISH, EH? I HOPE YOU LIKED MY LITTLE COMEDY! A RIB-TICKLER, WASN'T IT? OH, BY THE WAY! A WEEK LATER, THEY FOUND LISA WESTLAKE'S BODY, PROPPED IN A CLOSET, AT THE FUNERAL PARLOR! THERE WAS A FAINT SMILE ON HER WITHERED FACE! I GUESS SHE LIKED JONAH'S LITTLE JOKE! SHE... AND JONAH.. WERE THE ONLY ONES THAT GOT IT, THOUGH!

THE CRYPT OF TERROR

NEH, HEH! *GREETINGS!* IT'S NICE TO SEE YOUR *HORROR-HAPPY FACES* ONCE AGAIN! SO YOU WANT ME TO TELL YOU ANOTHER OF MY *TALES OF TERROR* THAT I KEEP HERE IN THE *CRYPT*, EH? WELL, COME IN! COME IN AND SIT DOWN BESIDE ME... *THE CRYPT-KEEPER!* I HAVE A REAL *SPINE-TINGLER* READY FOR YOU! WHILE I'M TELLING YOU THIS *CHILLING YARN*, WE CAN AMUSE OURSELVES WITH A FRIENDLY GAME OF *POKER!* I HAVE *ONE* ON THE *FIRE*... GETTING *RED-HOT!* OH, BY THE WAY... I CALL THIS LITTLE *SCREAM-PLAY*...

CHEESE, THAT'S HORRIBLE!





WHEN HENDRICK VILLHEM, A MILD-MANNERED, SHY, QUIET TYPE, ARRIVED HERE FROM HOLLAND TWO YEARS AGO, HE BROUGHT WITH HIM HIS MOST PRECIOUS POSSESSION... THE FORMULA FOR MAKING *VILLHEM CHEESE!* AS HE STEPPED OFF THE GANGPLANK IN NEW YORK...




I LEARNED FROM MY CONTACTS ABROAD YOU WOULD BE ON THIS BOAT, SO I CAME DIRECTLY TO NEW YORK TO MEET YOU WHEN YOU LANDED!
VELL! DAT VAS VERY NICE OF YOU, MISTER PRINCE!
VILLHEM! I WON'T MINCE WORDS! I HAVE A BUSINESS PROPOSITION TO OFFER YOU! I WANT TO PRODUCE VILLHEM CHEESE IN THIS COUNTRY ON A LARGE-SCALE COMMERCIAL BASIS! I AM WILLING TO FINANCE THE WHOLE UNDERTAKING!
YOU.. YOU VANT TO BUY MY FORMULA? NO! I I AM SORRY, MISTER PRINCE!
THE FORMULA FOR VILLHEM CHEESE HAS BEEN HANDED DOWN FROM FADDER TO SON FOR GENERATIONS! I CANNOT SELL IT!
LOOK HERE, VILLHEM! I DON'T WANT TO TAKE YOUR FORMULA AWAY FROM YOU! YOU'LL BE A PARTNER IN THE BUSINESS!
YOU MEAN.. I PUT IN MY FORMULA... UNT YOU PUT IN THE MONEY... AND VE GO FIFTY-FIFTY INTO BUSINESS?
THAT'S THE DEAL, VILLHEM! TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT!
68
HENDRICK VILLHEM TOOK IT! BUT HE HAD ONE STIPULATION...
WHAT'S THAT, HENDRICK?
I VILL NOT TELL THE FORMULA OR WRITE IT DOWN! IT IS HERE... HERE IN MY HEAD.. AND HERE IT SHALL REMAIN!
BUT, HOW..
I VILL MIX ALL OF THE INGREDIENTS IN THEIR PROPER PROPORTIONS MYSELF.. IN PRIVATE!
WELL, HOW IN BLAZES ARE WE GOING TO TURN THE CHEESES OUT IN QUANTITY, IF YOU HAVE TO MAKE EACH ONE YOURSELF!
DAT, MISTER PRINCE, IS YOUR PROBLEM!
2

VILLHEM CHEESE WAS *FAMOUS* IN EASTERN EUROPE! ITS DISTINCTIVE *FLAVOR* ...ITS DELICIOUS *TANG* ...WAS A CHEESE-LOVER'S DELIGHT! BRADBURY PRINCE KNEW A GOOD PRODUCT WHEN HE SMELLED IT! SO HE LOST NO TIME IN SOLVING THE PROBLEM HENDRICK VILLHEM HAD PROVOKED...

THERE IT IS, VILLHEM! WHAT DO YOU SAY?

YOU VANT ME TO MAKE CHEESES *ZO BIG*...IN *ZUCH TREMENDOUS VATS*?

SURE! YOU MIX IT UP JUST LIKE THE LITTLE ONES YOU USED TO MAKE! THEN, WHEN IT HARDENS...WE CUT IT UP! WE COULD GET OVER *TWO-HUNDRED* SMALL CHEESES FROM *ONE* VAT!

BUT IT TAKES *TWO YEARS* TO *AGE*!

WHAT? TWO YEARS?

YAH! DAT'S RIGHT! IT TAKES TWO YEARS TO *AGE PROPERLY*. TILL THE *BACTERIA* HAS...

BRADBURY PRINCE ALMOST SLEW HIS MILLIONAIRE TOP! HE ALMOST TOOK HENDRICK VILLHEM AND HIS FORMULA AND TOSSED HIM INTO ONE OF THE EMPTY VATS THEY WERE STANDING OVER! BUT THEN... THEN AN IDEA CAME TO HIM! WHY TOSS HIM *NOW*? WHY NOT... IN *TWO YEARS*!

TWO YEARS! IN TWO YEARS HE WOULD HAVE STARTED... LET'S SEE... ABOUT *SIX HUNDRED* VATS OF CHEESE! SIX HUNDRED GIGANTIC CHEESES, *EIGHT FEET* HIGH BY *SIX FEET* ACROSS! THAT WOULD BE PLENTY! *PLENTY!*

YES! YOU GUESSED IT! BRADBURY PRINCE'S IDEA WAS... *MURDER!* IN TWO YEARS... HE WOULD OWN THE BUSINESS... AND SIX HUNDRED HUGE *VILLHEM CHEESES*... OUTRIGHT...

HAH, HAH! WELL, HENDRICK! WHAT'S TWO TEARS, EH? WHAT'S *TWO* YEARS IN A *LIFETIME* PARTNERSHIP?

A MENE... DROP IN THE VAT... MISTER PRINCE!

THAT NIGHT... ALONE IN HIS LUXURIOUS APARTMENT... BRADBURY PRINCE MADE HIS PLANS...

YES, SIR! JUST BEFORE THE FIRST VAT IS BROKEN OPEN AND THE CHEESES CUT AND WRAPPED... I'LL GET RID OF THAT LITTLE... *MOUSE!*


THEN... THEN I'LL HAVE THE OUTPUT OF TWO YEARS COMING OF AGE! I'LL MAKE A FORTUNE... AND THAT LITTLE CREEP... THAT LITTLE MOUSE... WON'T BE THERE TO TAKE HALF OF IT AWAY!
HAH, HAH! THAT'S A GOOD ONE! HAH, HAH! I CALLED HIM A MOUSE! HE'S THE FIRST MOUSE I EVER HEARD OF THAT MAKES HIS OWN CHEESE...
HAH, HAH! A MOUSE! THAT'S WHAT HE IS! A MOUSE! AND I... I'VE GOT HIM TRAPPED!
AND SO... THE P & V CHEESE COMPANY, MAKERS OF THE ORIGINAL DUTCH TYPE VILLHEM CHEESE, WAS BORN! EVERY DAY... IN DEEP DARK SECRECY, HENDRICK VILLHEM MIXED ANOTHER VAT OF CHEESE...
SUCH TREMENDOUS QUANTITIES! I... I HOPE IT TASTES THE SAME LIKE IN THE OLD COUNTRY!
AND EVERY DAY, ANOTHER VAT OF CHEESE WAS MOVED INTO THE AGING WAREHOUSE FOR A TWO-YEAR STAY...
VELL, MISTER PRINCE! DAT'S NUMBER VUN-HUNDRED AND TEN!
YEP! TIME REALLY FLIES, DOESN'T IT, HENDRICK?
AFTER ALMOST A YEAR AND A HALF HAD PASSED
LOOK, HENDRICK! LOOK! ADVANCED ORDERS! THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF ADVANCED ORDERS! WHEN WILL THE FIRST VAT YOU MIXED BE READY TO OPEN?
LET'S SEE! IN SEVEN MORE MONTHS, MISTER PRINCE!
SEVEN MONTHS... SEVEN LONG MONTHS! THE ORDERS PILED UP! THE FIRST YEAR'S OUTPUT... THREE HUNDRED AND FIVE VATS... ENOUGH TO MAKE SIXTY-FIVE THOUSAND SMALL CHEESES... HAD ALREADY BEEN SOLD...
TOMORROW, MISTER PRINCE! TOMORROW VE OPEN THE FIRST VAT!
GOOD! GOOD! WE'LL HAVE A CELEBRATION! YOU WON'T HAVE TO MIX A VAT TOMORROW! IT'LL BE A HOLIDAY!


I... I VAS VONDERING, MISTER PRINCE! I VAS VONDERING IF I COULDN'T START DRAWING SOME MONEY FROM THE BUSINESS, NOW! VE MUST HAVE COLLECTED PLENTY OF MONEY ALREADY IN ADVANCED ORDERS!
SURE, HENDRICK! SURE! AFTER TOMORROW! AFTER THE VAT IS OPENED, AND THE CHEESE IS TASTED!
YES, MISTER PRINCE! I UNDERSTAND! I UNDERSTAND! YOU ARE VORRYING IT MAY NOT BE GOOD, YES?
MAYBE, HENDRICK! MAYBE! NOW WHY DON'T YOU DO MIX UP TODAY'S VAT!
HENDRICK VILLHEM LEFT BRADBURY PRINCE'S OFFICE, AS THE DOOR CLOSED, BRADBURY LEANED BACK IN HIS SWIVEL CHAIR AND ROARED WITH LAUGHTER...
HAW, HAW! WHAT A MEEK CREEP! WHAT A MOUSE!
HE STOOD UP! HIS FACE REDDENED! HIS EYES BULGED IN VIOLENT ANGER...
TODAY'S THE DAY, HENDRICK! TODAY'S THE DAY YOU GET YOURS... YOU MOUSE!
BRADBURY PRINCE OPENED THE DOOR TO HIS OFFICE AND PEERED DOWN THE CORRIDOR TOWARD THE MIXING ROOM...
DOOR'S LOCKED! ALWAYS LOCKS IT! AFRAID I'LL STEAL HIS STUPID FORMULA! FOOL! MOUSEY FOOL! I'VE GOT A SKELETON KEY!
BRADBURY MOVED DOWN THE CORRIDOR AND STOPPED BEFORE THE MIXING-ROOM DOOR, HE COULD SEE HENDRICK INSIDE... STIRRING THE HUGE VAT FROM THE PLATFORM THAT CROSSED OVER IT! SLOWLY HE UNLOCKED THE DOOR AND STEPPED INSIDE.
GOT TO BE QUIET... LIKE A CAT... STALKING A MOUSE... HEH, HEH...
THE STARTLED HENDRICK VILLHEM SCREAMED AS BRADBURY PRINCE PUSHED! HIS EAR-SPLITTING SHRIEK ECHOED FROM WALL TO WALL...
EEEE
AAH!
6


THE CHURNING AND SPLASHING IN THE VAT STOPPED AFTER A FEW MINUTES! HENDRICK VILLNEM WAS DEAD! DROWNED IN HIS OWN CHEESE...
I'LL LEAVE HIS BODY THERE! THE CHEESE WILL HARDEN...AND IN TWO YEARS..., WELL, TWO YEARS IS A LONG TIME!
THE VAT CONTAINING HENDRICK VILLNEM'S BODY WAS PUSHED INTO THE ASIAS WAREHOUSE, AND STORED IN ITS PROPER PLACE..
612
613
IN TWO YEARS, THE INVESTIGATIONS INTO HIS 'MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE' WILL HAVE BEEN OVER! IT WILL HAVE BEEN FORGOTTEN!
THAT NIGHT, AS BRADBURY PRINCE LAY IN HIS BED...
CAN'T SEEM TO FALL ASLEEP TONIGHT! BEEN TOSSING AND TURNING FOR THREE HOURS! KEEP THINKING ABOUT VILLNEM IN THAT CHEESE! SUPPOSE...SUPPOSE THEY OPEN THAT ONE TOMORROW?
BRADBURY PRINCE SOT UP! HE DRESSED QUICKLY...
GOT TO GET OVER TO THE WAREHOUSE! GOT TO SEE IF THE VAT IS IN ITS RIGHT PLACE...LAST IN LINE...NOT FIRST!
AS BRADBURY WALKED DOWN THE DARK DESERTED STREET...
EVERYTHING LOOKS STRANGE... WEIRD...
AS HE WALKED ALONG, A SOFT PADDING SOUND SEEMED TO BE FOLLOWING HIM..
IT SOUNDS...LIKE... LIKE AN ANIMAL! A GIANT ANIMAL...
THE PADDING WAS CLOSER, NOW! BRADBURY TURNED AND...
GOOD LORD! EYES! THE EYES OF A CAT!
6

BRADBURY DANTED INTO A DOONWAY AND SLAMMED THE DODR BETWEEN HIMSELF AND THE SHINING, GLEAMING EYES...

I...I SEEM TO BE IN A DESERTED WAREHOUSE! IT... IT'S DANK IN HERE...

HE MOVED THROUGH THE DARKNESS! HE NO LONGER COULD HEAR THE SCRATCHING ON THE DOOR THROUGH WHICH HE HAD ENTERED! HE PASSED THROUGH A LOW OPENING LIKE A ROUGHLY HEWN HOLE IN THE WALL, AND THEN...

LOOKS LIKE A *PLATFORM*... WITH A METAL RAIL AROUND IT...

BRADBURY MOUNTED THE PLATFORM AND MOVED ALONG IT! A STRANGE COIL OF METAL CROSSED IT! HE CLIMBED OVER IT...

IT'S LIKE...LIKE A HUGE *SPRING*...

AND THEN HE SAW IT... THE LARGE WEDGE OF CHEESE ...VILLHEM CHEESE! HE COULD TELL IT BY THE FAMILIAR SMELL! BUT WHAT WAS THAT *IN* IT... *IN THE CHEESE*!

GOOD LORD IT'S A PART OF HENDRICK VILLHEM'S BODY... HIS *HANDS* STICKING OUT! I...I...

BRADBURY PRINCE LEANED AGAINST THE HUGE WEDGE OF CHEESE ...SICK! IT TILTED SLIGHTLY! SUDDENLY HE HEARD A CLICK AND THE SOUND OF METAL SINGING THROUGH THE AIR...

NO...NO ..YA-A-A-A-H!

OUTSIDE OF BRADBURY PRINCE'S LUXURIOUS BEDROOM, HIS BUTLER WAS JUST GETTING READY TO RETIRE WHEN HE HEARD THE SHRIEK OF HORROR CUT SHORT BY THE LOUD SHARP SNAP! HE RUSHED IN...

MR. PRINCE! I...I... *GULP!* HE. HE'S BEEN *SEVERED IN HALF!*

HEH, HEH! WELL, THAT'S MY STORY, KIDDIES! OLD BRADBURY HAD BEEN *DREAMING!* THE *ONLY* PUZZLING THING IS: IF HE WAS ONLY DREAMING THAT HE GOT CAUGHT IN THAT HUGE *MOUSE-TRAP*, WHAT WAS THE *SNAP* THE BUTLER HEARD? AND WHAT MADE BRADBURY GO TO *PIECES*? WELL, LOOKS LIKE HENDRICK WASN'T THE THE *ONLY MOUSEY* CHARACTER IN THIS STORY, EH? MR. PRINCE REALLY *ENDED UP* LIKE ONE A *MOUSE*, THAT IS! 'BYE, NOW! OH, BY THE WAY! NEXT TIME YOU EAT VILLHEM CHEESE... DON'T *STUDY* IT TOO CAREFULLY! YOU MIGHT FIND A BIT OF *HENDRICK!*



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FEAR
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FEATURING
THE OLD WITCH
THE TOMB KEEPER
THE CRYPT KEEPER
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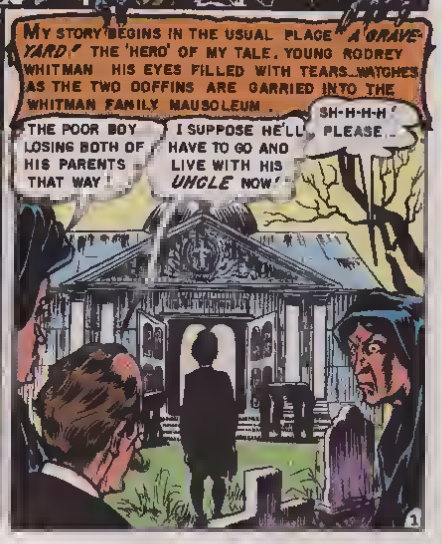


THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

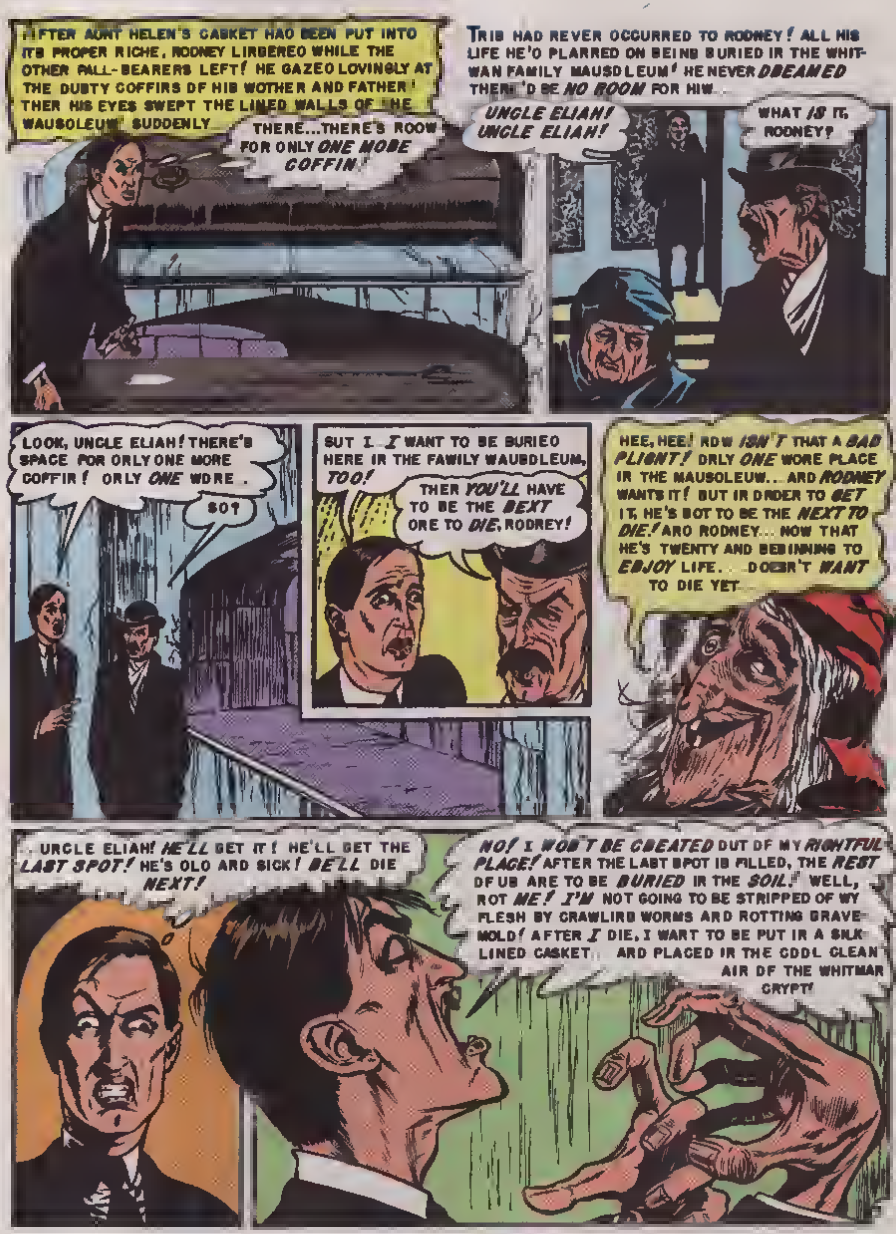
HEE, HEE! YEP! IT'S *ME* AGAIN! *THE OLD WITCH*, MISTRESS OF *THE HAUNT OF FEAR!* COME IN! COME IN! MY CAULDRON IS BUBBLING AND STEAMING WITH ITS EVIL BREW ONCE MORE AND I'M READY TO DISH OUT ANOTHER OF MY TALES OF TERROR! READY? GOOD! THEN DRAW UP CLOSE TO THE CRACKLING FIRE AND GAZE INTO THE SWIRLING CONTENTS OF MY CAULDRON, AND I'LL TELL YOU THE CHILLER I CALL

ROOM FOR ONE MORE!






AFTER THE TWO COFFINS ARE DEPOSITED IN THEIR RESPECTIVE PLACES IN THE MAUSOLEUM, THE SMALL GROUP OF MOURNERS TURNS AND SILENTLY BEGINS TO FILE AWAY! NODNEY, HOWEVER, STANDS STARING INTO THE OPEN CRYPT...
COME, RODNEY!
I'LL...BE ALONG ...IN A MOMENT, UNCLE...SOB...
TIGHT-LIPPED, AND CLUTCHING HIS HAT IN HIS LITTLE FISTS, THE BOY ENTERS THE HUGE MAUSOLEUM AND LOOKS AROUND! THE WALLS ARE LINED WITH CASKETS THE REMAINS OF HIS ANCESTORS! THEN HIS GLANCE FALLS UPON THE TWO NEW COFFINS HIS MOTHER'S AND FATHER'S...
SOMEDAY...SOMEDAY I'LL BE BURIED HERE TOO...AND THEN...WE'LL BE TOGETHER AGAIN, MOMMY DADDY!
YES! THAT'S HOW MY STORY BEGINS! RODNEY'S PARENTS HAD BEEN KILLED IN AN AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENT! AFTER THE FUNERAL, RODNEY WENT TO LIVE WITH HIS AUNT HELEN AND UNCLE ELIAH AND THEIR TWO CHILDREN! AT FIRST IT WAS PLEASANT FOR RODNEY! THEY ALL FELT SORRY FOR HIM! BUT SOON THINGS GOT PRETTY BAD...
LIKE
UNCLE ELIAH! WHY CAN'T I HAVE A PONY? ROBERT AND CHARLES EACH HAVE ONE!
SORRY, RODNEY! I CAN'T AFFORD IT!
...AND...
WHY...SOB...WHY WON'T YOU LET ME PLAY WITH... YOUR TOYS?
GO AWAY, RODNEY! YOU'RE ONLY A COUSIN...
YES! THINGS GOT PRETTY BAD! SO BAD IN FACT THAT SOMETIMES RODNEY WOULD GO DOWN TO THE CEMETERY AND STAND LOOKING AT THE FAMILY MAUSOLEUM TEARS STREAMING DOWN HIS CHEEKS! AND HE'D WISH...
I WISH I WERE DEAD! I WISH I WERE BURIED IN THERE NEXT TO MY MOMMY AND MY DADDY!
BUT EVENTUALLY, CHILDREN GROW UP! AND RODNEY WAS NO EXCEPTION! HE WAS TWENTY WHEN HIS AUNT HELEN DIED! THE FUNERAL WAS HELD ON A BLEAK, GREY DECEMBER DAY! RODNEY WAS A PALL-BEARER...
EASY NOW!
WATCH THE DOOR-HANDLE! IT'LL SCRATCH THE...
SH-H-H-H! NO TALKING!
2


AFTER AUNT HELEN'S CASKET HAD BEEN PUT INTO ITS PROPER NICHE, RODNEY LIBERIO WHILE THE OTHER PALL-BEARERS LEFT! HE GAZED LOVINGLY AT THE DUSTY COFFINS OF HIS MOTHER AND FATHER! THEN HIS EYES SWEPT THE LINED WALLS OF THE MAUSOLEUM! SUDDENLY
THERE...THERE'S ROOM FOR ONLY ONE MORE COFFIN!
THIS HAD NEVER OCCURRED TO RODNEY! ALL HIS LIFE HE'D PLANNED ON BEING BURIED IN THE WHITMAN FAMILY MAUSOLEUM! HE NEVER DREAMED THERE'D BE NO ROOM FOR HIM...
UNCLE ELIAH! UNCLE ELIAH!
WHAT IS IT, RODNEY?
LOOK, UNCLE ELIAH! THERE'S SPACE FOR ONLY ONE MORE COFFIN! ONLY ONE MORE.
SO?
BUT I...I WANT TO BE BURIED HERE IN THE FAMILY MAUSOLEUM, TOO!
THEN YOU'LL HAVE TO BE THE NEXT ONE TO DIE, RODNEY!
HEE, HEE! NOW ISN'T THAT A BAD PLIGHT! ONLY ONE MORE PLACE IN THE MAUSOLEUM... AND RODNEY WANTS IT! BUT IN ORDER TO GET IT, HE'S GOT TO BE THE NEXT TO DIE! AND RODNEY... NOW THAT HE'S TWENTY AND BEGINNING TO ENJOY LIFE... DOESN'T WANT TO DIE YET
...UNCLE ELIAH! HE'LL GET IT! HE'LL GET THE LAST SPOT! HE'S OLD AND SICK! HE'LL DIE NEXT!
NO! I WON'T BE CHEATED OUT OF MY RIGHTFUL PLACE! AFTER THE LAST SPOT IS FILLED, THE REST OF US ARE TO BE BURIED IN THE SOIL! WELL, NOT ME! I'M NOT GOING TO BE STRIPPED OF MY FLESH BY CRAWLING WORMS AND ROTTING GRAVE-MOLD! AFTER I DIE, I WANT TO BE PUT IN A SILK-LINED CASKET AND PLACED IN THE COOL CLEAN AIR OF THE WHITMAN CRYPT!


AND SO, RODREY MADE UP NIS MIND' THEY WOULDN'T GE ABLE TO BURY UNCLE ELIAH IF THEY DDULDN'T FIND HIS BODY..
THAT YOU, RDDNEY?
RODNEY?
RODN... AAAAAAAAGH!
IT NAD GEEN SO EASY' URCLE ELIAH HAD GEEN ALDNE IN THE HDUSE! RDGERT AND CNARLES NAD GDNE TO A MOVIE' RODNEY HAD GONE OUT TOD . BUT NAO RETURNED...
RDW TO GET RID DF THE BDDY, SD TNEY'LL NEVER FIND IT
A FEW MILES FRDM ELIAH WHITMAN'S HOUSE WAS A TRACT DF SWAMPLARD CDRTAINING SEVERAL DUICK-SARD PDDLS' RDDNEY DNOPPED PODR UNCLE ELIAN INTO DNE OF THESE
NOW, UNCLE ELIAH, THE NIDNE IN THE NAUSDLEUM IS MINE. ALL MINE...
URCLE ELIAH'S MYSTERIDUS DISAPPEARARCE WAS REVER EXPLAINED' ALL THREE BDYS HAD AIRTIGHT ALIGIS ARD SO THE CASE WAS CLDSED' YEARS LATER, URCLE ELIAH WAS DECLARED LEGALLY DEAD, AHD RDGERT AND CHARLES IRNERITED HIS WEALTH' RDDNEY RECEIVED A SNALL SUN' THER, DNE DAY..
RDDREY RUSHED TO CHARLES' RODM' A FEAR CLUTCHED AT NIS NEART' A FEAR THAT CHARLES MIGHT GE DYING..
NO! I WON'T LET IT HAPPEN' HE'LL GET MY PLACE... MY PLACE IN THE FAMILY VAULT' ND I'LL... I'LL HAVE TO GET RID DF HIS BODY.. LIKE ELIAN'S
RDDNEY' CDNE UPSTAIRS' QUICKLY' I FEEL ILL. TERRIBLY ILL'


WHEN RODNEY REACHED CHARLES' ROOM, HE FOUND THAT HIS FEARS WERE JUSTIFIED..
WINE HOBERT, RODNEY' TELL HIM TO COME HOME FROM EUROPE!
NO, CHARLES'
NO NEED FOR THAT, CHARLES!
RODNEY!
A-R-R-G-G-H-H-H!
IT WAS SO SIMPLE' RODNEY TIED HEAVY WEIGHTS YO POOR UNFORTUNATE CHARLES AND DROPPED HIM INYO A SMALL LAKE
THEY SAY THIS IS ONE OF THOSE BOTTOMLESS LAKES, CHARLES' WELL, WITH THAT MUCH WEIGHT, YOU'LL SHOW 'EM THEY'RE WRONG... WON'T YOU!
THEN, WHEN ROBERT RETURNED FROM ABROAD..
NO, ROBERT! I HAVEN'T HEARD FROM CHARLES IN MONTHS!
FUNNY' HE'S DISAPPEARED!
RODNEY' WHAT DID YOU DO TO CHARLES?
LET GO OF ME! WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
YOU AND I ARE THE ONLY WHITMANS LEFT, RODNEY! YOU'VE HATED US EVER SINCE YOU CAME TO LIVE WITH US YEARS AGO, HAVEN'T YOU' YOU'VE BEEN JEALOUS OF OUR WEALTH' YOU KILLED MY FATHER DIDN'T YOU? AND YOU KILLED CHARLES' YOU FIGURE IF YOU KILL US ALL, YOU'LL GET OUR MONEY!
NO! IT ISN'T THE MONEY...
5


RODNEY'S FACE PALED! HE REALIZED WHAT HE HAD JUST SAID...
THEN...THEN WHAT IS IT, RODNEY?
ALL RIGHT! I'LL TELL YOU!
IT'S THAT LAST SPOT IN THE FAMILY CRYPT! IT'S MINE, DO YOU HEAR? AND NO ONE IS GOING TO TAKE IT FROM ME!
YOU... YOU KILLED MY FATHER AND MY BROTHER FOR THAT?
YES! AND I'M GOING TO KILL YOU, TOO!
YOU'RE MAD, RODNEY! MAD!
YES, RODNEY WAS MAD, DEAR READER! MAD ENOUGH TO KILL! AND HE DID! THEN HE BURIED ROBERT IN THE CELLAR...
NOW, THIS MANSION IS MINE! NO ONE WILL LOOK FOR YOU HERE, ROBERT! I'LL JUST CEMENT OVER THIS SPOT AGAIN!
AND SO, THE LAST PLACE IN THE WHITMAN FAMILY MAUSOLEUM NOW BELONGED TO RODNEY WHITMAN ABSOLUTELY...
YES, SIR?
I'D LIKE TO SEE YOUR COFFINS! I WANT TO PICK ONE OUT... FOR MYSELF!
RODNEY ORDERED HIS COFFIN AND HAD IT PLACED IN HIS NICHE IN THE FAMILY VAULT! EVERY SO OFTEN HE WOULD GO DOWN TO THE CEMETERY AND POLISH THE BRASS HINGES AND LOCKS...
MY COFFIN... IN MY SPOT... AND NO ONE CAN TAKE IT FROM ME!
AND THEN ONE NIGHT, AS RODNEY SAT IN THE RUDE LIVING ROOM OF THE MANSION HE HAD INHERITED
WHAT WAS THAT? SOUNDED LIKE A NOISE... IN THE CELLAR!

RODNEY WAS RIGHT! WHAT HE HAD HEARD WAS THE CEMENT OF THE CELLAR FLOOR... CRACKING OPEN...

...AND THE ROTTED HANDS OF *ROBERT WHITMAN* PUSHING UPWARD INTO THE BLACKNESS...

AND FAR AWAY, ON THE SHORE OF A SMALL LAKE, A BLOATED, FISH-MARRED CORPSE STRUGGLED ALONG THE BEACH... DRAGGING THE HEAVY WEIGHTS CHAINED TO ITS LEGS! *CHARLES WHITMAN*...

AND IN THE SWAMPLAND, FROM A GURGLING, SUCKING QUICKSAND POOL, A HEAD AND SHOULDERS ROSE FROM THE SURFACE... SAND POURING FROM THE MOUTH CAVITY AND EYE SOCKETS OF *ELIAH WHITMAN*...

INSIDE THE WHITMAN MANSION, RODNEY BEGAN TO SHIVER! A STRANGE FEELING CAME OVER HIM! THE SENSATION OF *FEAR*...

CHARLES AND ELIAH MET COMING ACROSS THE GREEN LAWN... AND THEY STUMBLED TOWARD THE HOUSE TOGETHER...

AS IF IT WERE TIMED BY A MASTER DIRECTOR, ROBERT BURST FROM THE CELLAR DOOR AS CHARLES AND ELIAH BROKE THROUGH THE FRENCH WINDOWS! ROBERT... ROTTED AND DECOMPOSED! CHARLES... BLOATED AND DRAGGING THE HEAVY WEIGHTS! ELIAH... SAND AND FLESH DROPPING FROM HIS WHITENED BONES!

NO! NO! KEEP AWAY!

OUTSIDE THE WHITMAN MANSION, THE STILL NIGHT AIR WAS PIERCED BY AN AGONIZING SHRIEK..

E-E-E-E-E-H

LATER IN THE CELLAR, ROBERT WHITMAN TOSSED A SACK INTO THE GRAVE HE HAD DUG HIMSELF OUT OF! THEN HE BEGAN TO COVER IT OVER..

WHILE OUT AT THE LAKE, CHARLES WHITMAN TOSSED *HIS* SACK...TIED WITH THE WEIGHTS HE HAD DRAGGED.. INTO THE MUNKY WATER..

AND IN THE SWAMPLAND, ELIAH WHITMAN TOSSED THE SACK CONTAINING *HIS* SHARE OF RODNEY WHITMAN INTO THE GURGLING QUICKSAND.

AND IF ANYONE HAPPENED TO BE AROUND THE CEMETERY THAT NIGHT, THEY WOULD HAVE SEEN A GRUESOME SIGHT! THREE DECOMPOSED, ROTTED, FOUL-SMELLING CORPSES CROSSING OVER THE SOFT GRAVES.

IN CASE YOU'RE INTERESTED, THE WHITMAN MAUSOLEUM IS FULL NOW! THE LAST NICHE TO BE FILLED IS *REALLY* FULL! THREE BODIES ARE NEATLY STACKED IN THE CASKET THAT RODNEY WHITMAN HAD HOPEFULLY PURCHASED FOR HIMSELF..

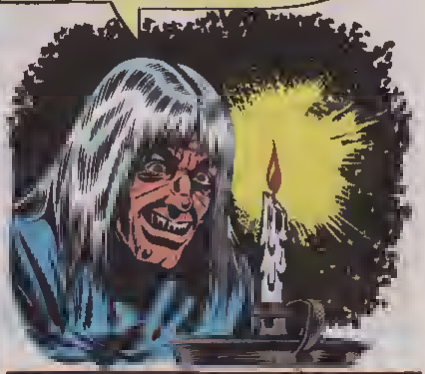
HEE..HEE! AND THAT'S MY TALE, DEAR READER! POOR RODNEY! HE DOESN'T KNOW *WHERE* HE'S AT! *WELL?* WOULD *YOU?* BUT I FEEL *SORRY* FOR ELIAH, CHARLES, AND ROBERT! THEY'RE SO *CROWDED* THEY DON'T EVEN HAVE ROOM TO *COFF-IN!* HEE,HEE! OH, BY THE WAY IF YOU HAVEN'T HAD TOO MUCH OF ME, READ *THE HAUNT OF FEAR* STORY IN CRIME SUSPENSTORIES! YOU CAN GO ON TO THE *CRYPT-KEEPER* NOW! HE'S WAITING FOR YOU!

THE CRYPT OF TERROR

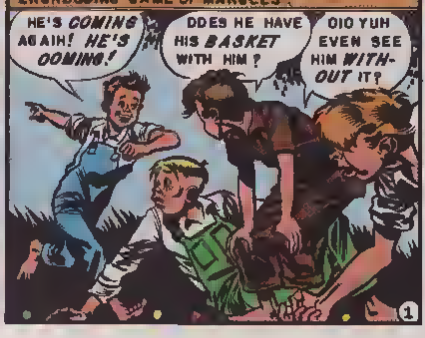
NOW THAT YOU'VE TASTED THE SICKLY BREW OF THAT UGLY CRONE, *THE OLD WITCH*, AND ARE THOROUGHLY NAUSEATED, IT'S *MY* TURN! HERE'S A TALE FROM MY COLLECTION HERE IN THE *CRYPT* THAT I'M SURE WILL MAKE YOUR HAIR STAND ON END! SO COME CLOSE TO YOUR OLD *CRYPT-KEEPER*! I WANT TO WATCH YOUR FACES PALE FROM THE YARN I CALL.

THE BASKET!

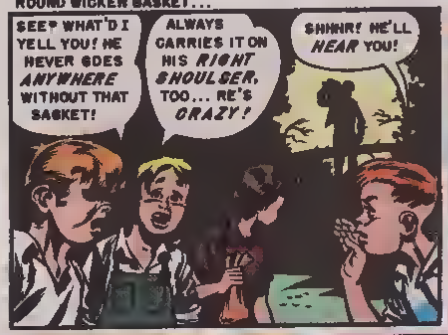




MY STORY HAS ITS BEGINNING ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF A SMALL TOWN! A BREATHLESS BOY RUSHES UP TO A GROUP OF CHILDREN HUDDLED OVER AN ENGROSSING GAME OF MARBLES



THE WIDE-EYED EXPECTANT FACES OF THE CHILDREN ALL TURN IR TRE DIRECTION OF THE STRANGE FIGURE WALKING TOWARD THEM! OR RIS RIGHT SROULDER, HE CARRIES A ROUND WICKEN BASKET...



THE MAN CARRYING THE WICKER BASKET COMES UP TO THE SWALL GROUP OF CHILDREN AND SMILES...



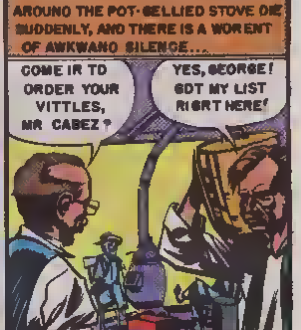
MR CABEZ, STILL HOLDING THE GASKET ON HIS RIGRT SHOULDER, SMILES DOWN AT THE SRIRING UPTURNED FACES AROUND RIM...



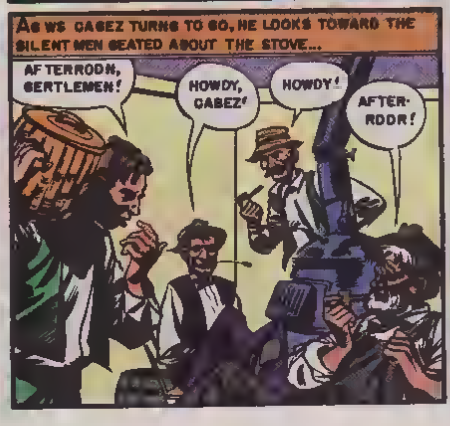
MR CABEZ CONTINUES OR DOWN THE ROAD WHISTLING A TUNE! THE CHILDREN WATCH HIM AS HE GOES...



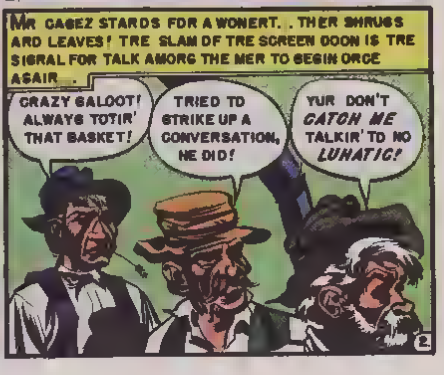
THE SQUEEKY SCREEN DOOR OF THE TOWN GENERAL STONE SHRIEKS A WARNING AS MR CABEZ ENTERS! THE LAUGHTER AND TALK OF THE MEN AROUND THE POT-BELLIED STOVE DIE SUDDENLY, AND THERE IS A MOMENT OF AWKWARD SILENCE...



AS MR CABEZ TURNS TO GO, HE LOOKS TOWARD THE SILENT MEN SEATED ABOUT THE STOVE...



MR CABEZ STANDS FOR A MOMENT. . THEN SHRUGS AND LEAVES! THE SLAM OF THE SCREEN DOOR IS THE SIGNAL FOR TALK AMONG THE MEN TO BEGIN ONCE AGAIN . .




I WONDER WHY HE CARRIES THAT THERE BASHET 'ROUND WITH HIM?
HE'S CRAZY, THAT'S WHY! AIN'T I RIGHT, GEORGE?
SURE ARE, LUKE!
SEE THIS HERE SLIP O' PAPER? IT'S HIS VITTLES ORDER! YOU KNOW WHAT I SEE EVERY TIME I DELIVER AN ORDER UP TO HIS PLACE?
HE ALWAYS ANSWERS THE DOOR, CARRYIN' THAT BASKET OR HIS SHOULDER! I WASHE THAT! CARRYIN' IT 'ROUND HIS HOUSE EVER!
HE SURE IS LOGO!
YES! THAT'S THE WAY MY STORY BEGINS! THAT'S WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON IN THIS TOWN FOR YEARS AND YEARS! EVER LONGER THAN THE CHILDREN CAN REMEMBER, VINCENT CABEZ HAS BEEN LUGGING THAT WICKER BASKET AROUND!
WHAT'S IN IT? PATIENCE, KIDDIES! YOU'LL FIND OUT! SO ON WITH MY TALE . .
THE NEXT TIME MR. CABEZ COMES INTO TOWN, HE PLODS ALONG SLOWLY DRAGGING HIS FEET! BUT HIS FAMILIAR BASHET IS PERCHED ON HIS SHOULDER...
SAY! LOOK AT MR. CABEZ! HE LOOKS AWFUL!
HE'S PALE LOOKING! HE MUST BE SICK!
MUST BE GETTING TIRED OF CARRYIN' HIS BASKET!
GEE! DO YOU THINK WE OUGHT TO KID HIM TODAY?
BUT MR. CABEZ, IN SPITE OF HIS FATIGUED APPEARANCE, STOPS AS USUAL AND SMILES DOWN AT THE CHILDREN AROUND HIM. . .
HELLO, KIDS!
HI, MR. CABEZ!
'LO, MR. CABEZ!
WHAT'S WRONG, KIDS? CAT GOT YOUR TONGUES? ISN'T ANYONE GOING TO ASK ME WHAT I'VE GOT IN MY BASKET THIS TIME?
GEE, MR. CABEZ! YOU DON'T LOOK SO GOOD!
AIN'T YUH FEELIN' WELL, MR. CABEZ?
3


MR CASEZ IS SILENT FOR A MOMENT' THEN HE SHRUGS AND CONTINUES ON TOWARD THE GENERAL STORE
GEE' HE GOT SUCH A FUNNY LOOK WHEN I ASKED HIM IF HE FELT WELL'
HE MUST BE SICK!
GEE' MAYBE HE'S GONNA DIE!
IF HE DOES, WE'LL ALL FIND OUT WHAT HE'S GOT IN THAT BASKET!
AW, CUT IT OUT! THAT AIN'T FUNNY'
YEAH' THE POOR GUY CAN'T HELP IT' IT'S A PHOBIA OR SOMETHING WITH HIM' MAYBE HE DON'T TRUST ANYBODY AND HE CARRIES HIS MONEY WITH HIM INSTEAD OF PUTTING IT IN THE BANK!
THE USUAL SILENCE GREETS VINCENT CASEZ AS HE ENTERS THE GENERAL STORE
HERE'S MY LIST, GEORGE'
SAY' YOU SICK, CASEZ? YOU LOOK PRETTY BAD'
I.. I DON'T FEEL WELL, GEORGE! GUESS I'LL STOP BY AND SEE DOC HAWKINS'
YOU BETTER'
WHEN HE LEAVES THE STORE, MR. CASEZ CROSSES OVER TO DOC HAWKINS' HOUSE
DOCTOR HAWKINS' I MUST SEE YOU'
COME IN, VINCENT! COME IN!
AFTER AN HOUR, VINCENT COMES OUT OF THE DOCTOR'S HOUSE AND GOES ON HOME! A WEEK PASSES! THEN .. ONE DAY..
HEY! LOOK' HERE COMES MR CASEZ'
HE LOOKS DIFFERENT'
HE AIN'T PALE NO MORE'
GEE' HE'S ALL BETTER! HE AIN'T GONNA DIE AFTER ALL!
AS MR CASEZ APPROACHES THE CHILDREN, THEY GATHER AROUND HIM SMILING CHATTERING . TUGGING AT HIS COAT
WHAT'S IN YOUR BASKET TODAY, MR. CASEZ?
TELL US, MR. CASEZ'
OUT OF MY WAY... BRATS!
OWW!


THE CHILD THAT MR CABEZ HAS STRUCK BEGINS TO CRY! THE OTHERS STAND DUMBFOUNDED, WATCHING MR CABEZ DISAPPEAR INTO THE GENERAL STORE....
SOB...SOB HE HIT ME!
DID YOU SEE HIS EYES? THE LOOK IN HIS ETES!
HEY! THE BASKET! HE HAD IT ON HIS LEFT SHOULDER!
I'M GONNA TELL MY OL' MAN!
AND INSIDE THE GENERAL STORE...
WHAT'S WRONG? AM I POISON OR SOMETHING? WHAT DOESN'T SOMEONE SAY SOMETHING? WHAT ARE YOU ALL SO QUIET ABOUT?
YOU'D BETTER GIVE ME YOUR LIST, MR. CABEZ, AND GO...BEFORE YOU START TROUBLE!
BUT THE NEXT MORNING, THE TOWNSFOLK ARE ALL WHISPERING ABOUT THE TERRIBLE THING THAT HAD HAPPENED DURING THE NIGHT
THAT'S RIGHT! HAPPENED LAST NIGHT! SOMEBODY ROBBED A GRAVE IN THE BURYIN' GROUNDS! THE BODY'S GONE!
I'LL BET IT WAS CABEZ! HE SEEMED WORSE'N EVER YESTERDAY!
DON'T JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS, LUKE!
THE SECOND NIGHT ANOTHER GRAVE IS ROBBED...
I TELL YOU IT IS CABEZ! HE'S GONE COMPLETELY LOCO!
WE OUGHTA STRING 'IM UP!
HEY, I JUST REMEMBERED SOMETHIN'!
CABEZ SHIPPED OUT A BOX YESTERDAY AT THE RAILWAY EXPRESS OFFICE WHERE I WORK! IT WAS PRETTY BIG ...'BOUT SIX FEET LONG! LIKE A... LIKE A COFFIN!
THAT SO!
YES! AND HE'S GOT ANOTHER ONE DOWN THERE TODAY!
LET'S GO DOWN AN' TAKE A LOOK! MAYBE IT AIN'T MORE OUT!
LATER...AT THE EXPRESS OFFICE...
GOOD LORD!
A BODY!
LET'S GET 'IM! LET'S LYNCH HIM!


SOOR AR ANGRY MOS IS MOVING UP MAIR STREET! MEN WITH MURDER IR THEIR HEARTS! A LYNCH MOR..
SOMEBODY STOP OFF AND SET OOC HAWKINS!
YEAH! HE OUGHTA SE IN ON THIS!
I'LL SET HIM!
THE DOCTOR OPERS THE DOOR TO THE FRANTIC KROCKING OF ZEKE SLACKMAR
C'MON, OOC! WE'RE SONNA LYRCH VIRCERT CASEZ! HE'S THE ORE SEER ROSSIN' THE SRAVES AND STEALIN' THE BODIES!
NO! TOU CAN'T LYRCH HIM! YOU'O.. SE KILLING AN INNOCENT MAN!
WHAT YOU TALKIN' ASOUT, OOC?
THERE ARE TWO VINCENT CASEZES!
TWO! WHAT IR SLAZES DO YOU MEAN?
VIRCERT CASEZ WAS SORR WITH TWO HEADS!
WHER I TOLD HIS MOTHER, SHE REFUSED TO ACCEPT HIM! TOLO ME TO OO AWAY WITH THE CHILD! THE OLO MIO-WIFE WHO HELPED ME OELIVER HIM VOLUNTEERED TO TAKE HIM.
PLEASE, OOCTOR! I'M AR OLO WOMAR! LET ME TAKE CARE OF HIM! OOR'T KILL HIM!
ALL RIGHT, MARTHA! BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO KEEP IT A SECRET!
YOU KNOW THE REST! VIRCERT SREW UP UROER MARTHA CASEZ'S SENTLE CARE! SHE KEPT HIM HIODEN FROM THE TOWNSFOLK UNTIL HE HAD SROWN TO MANHOOD! ONE SAY SHE SENT FOR ME...
I.. I'M DYIRS, DOCTOR HAWKINS! WHO WILL TAKE CARE OF VINCENT?
HE'S OLD ENOUGH TO TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF NOW, MARTHA!
AFTER SHE OIED, I WORKED OUT A PLAR OF HOW VINCENT COULD APPEAR OR THE STREETS WITHOUT LETTING ARYONE KROW OF HIS OTHER HEAO...
OO YOU THINK IT WILL WORK, OOCTOR?
OF COURSE, VINCENT! NOW REMEMSER! YOU CARRY THAT SASKET WHEREVER YOU SO OUT! IT HIDES YOUR OTHER HEAD!


VIRGENT HAD ALWAYS HAD CONTROL OVER HIS OTHER HEAD' HE WAS A GOOD MAN.. VINCENT. ..BUT RIS OTHER HEAD WAS EVIL...'
DOCTOR HAWKINS! LOOK AT ME! I HAVEN'T SLEPT A WINK IR FOUR NIGHTS' MY OTHER HEAD IS TRY-ING TO TAKE OVER MY BODY!
YOU MUST FIGHT IT, VIRGENT!
'BUT VIRGENT COULDN'T FIGHT IT! FINALLY THE OTHER HEAD WON OUT' IT GAINED CONTROL OF VINCENT'S BODY...'
OUT OF MY WAY!
OWWWW!
THE OTHER HEAD IS THE REAL CRIMINAL! THE OTHER HEAD IS THE EVIL DOER! BUT YOU CAN'T KILL IT WITHOUT KILLING VINCENT!
WHAT'LL WE DO, DOC? THE BOYS MUST BE THERE BY NOW!
ZEKE IS RIGHT' AT THAT MOMENT, THE OTHERS ARE APPROACHING VINCENT GAREZ'S HOUSE' SUDDENLY, THE DOOR SWINGS OPEN' THE MEN STOP IN THEIR TRACKS... HORRIFIED!
WHAT THE...?
GOOD LORD!
HE'S GOT.. HE'S GOT TWO...
THE BASKET! THAT'S WHAT HE DAMNED THE BASKET!
INDEED.. A TWO-HEADED VINCENT STANDS IR THE DOORWAY CONFRONTING THE MEN..
WHAT DO YOU MEN WANT?
PLEASE! FOR GOD'S SAKE! KILL US! KILL US! I CAN'T FIGHT HIM ANY LONGER!
THE LYNCHING PARTY JUST STANDS... EACH MAN ROOTED TO THE GROUND BY THE HORROR OF WHAT HE SEES...
WELL... IF NONE OF YOU WILL KILL US, I WILL!
STOP, YOU FOOL! I COMMAND YOU' STOP!
SUMMORING ALL HIS POWER, THE GOOD HEAD OF VINCENT GAREZ GAINS CONTROL OF THE BODY, SNATCHES A SHOTGUN FROM A TERRIFIED ONLOOKER, AND PULLS THE TRIGGER' TWO SHOTS RING OUT AND THE TWO-HEADED FIGURE SPRAWLS ON THE GROUND.
DEAD...
AND THAT'S MY STORY, KIDDIES! I HOPE THIS LITTLE TALE HAS TAUGHT YOU A LESSON' THERE'S ONLY ONE SURE WAY TO SETTLE AN ARGUMENT, IF YOU'VE GOT TWO HEADS! JUST BLOW ONE OF YOUR TOPS! NOW, I RETURN YOU TO THE OLD WITCH!

HERE'S A TOUCHING TALE OF...

HORROR IN THE SCHOOL ROOM





ANDY RACED BREATHLESSLY AROUND THE FAMILIAR CORNER! THE DRAB, CLAPBOARD SCHOOL BUILDING STOOD JUST AT THE END OF THE LITTER-STREWN STREET...



ANDY RAN AS FAST AS HIS LITTLE LEGS COULD CARRY HIM, CLUTCHING HIS SCHOOL BOOKS UNDER HIS ARM! HE RUSHED UP TO THE BIG OAK DOOR OF THE SCHOOL AND PUSHED IT OPEN...

FIFTEEN MINUTES LATE!

FIFTEEN *WHOLE* MINUTES *LATE!* GOLLY JEEPERS CREEPERS! MISTER WITHERSPOON'LL BE JUST... PANT... *FURIOUS!*




DOWN THE SILERT HALL ANDY NURRIED UNTIL NE CAME TO THE DODN OF NIS CLASSNOOM! HE STOOD OUTSIDE, TRYING TO CATCH NIS BREATH, AND LISTENING.
SDLLY! SPELLINS'S STANTED ALNEADY! NE'S FINISHED NDLL CALL!
TIMIDLY, ANDY TWISTED THE KNOB AND SWUNS THE SIG DOON OPEN SLISNTLY! HE PEERED IN! SILLY MANY JDNES SAW HIS FNISHTENED FACE AND TITTERED.
NMMPH! AND WNAT'S SD FUHNY, MISS JONES?
IT IT'S ANDY! HIS EYES...
MR. WITNERSPOON SPUN ARDURD SD THAT HE FACED THE SOY WND STOOD SHEEPISHLY IN THE DOORWAY.
AH! MASTEN ANDREW FIELD! SO AT LAST YOU GNACE US WITH YDUN PNESENCE!
YES, SIR!
MN. WITHERSPOON'S FACE REDDENED! NIS EYES SULSED! MR. WITHERSPOON WAS SETTING ANSNY.
WELL, DON'T JUST STAND THERE! WNY ARE TOU LATE? TELL ME! DID YOU MEET YDUN FNIEND ASAIN?
YES, SIN!
2+2=4
4+4=8
AND WHERE WENE TOU THIS TIME?
AFGHANISTAN... SIR!
MN. WITHERSPOON'S MOUTH EXPLODED ALL OVEN HIS FACE AS HE SCNEAMED.
LIAR! LIAH...LIAH...LIAH!
RD, SIR! IT'S TNE THUTH!
YOUNG MAN! THIS IS THE THIRD TIME THIS WEEK YOU'VE SEEN LATE! AND EACH TIME YOU'VE TOLD ME A PURPOSEFUL, DELIBERATE LIE! MONDAY IT WAS CHINA...WEDNESDAY, ITALY... AND NOW, AFGHANISTAN!
BUT I DIDN'T LIE! MAGOG TOOK ME THERE... TO ALL THOSE PLACES!
8


TELL ME ONCE MORE! JUST WHAT DOES THIS THIS 'MAGOG' LOOK LIKE?
I TOLD YOU! HE'S BIG.. TWICE AS BIG AS YOU WITH LONG TEETH AND BIG EYES!
AT FIRST I WAS SCARED OF HIM, BUT HE WAS KIND TO ME AND WHEN HE TOOK ME TO PLACES...
ALL RIGHT! THAT'S ENOUGH! THIS AFTERNOON YOU WILL STAY AFTER SCHOOL...
BUT MAGOG TOLD ME HE'D MEET ME
...YOU WILL STAY AFTER SCHOOL UNTIL YOU HAVE WRITTEN 'I WILL NEVER LIE AGAIN!' ONE HUNDRED TIMES!
BUT...
NOW GO STAND IN THE CORNER FOR THE REST OF SPELLING!
ANDY WAS GLAD THAT MEAN OLD MISTER WITHERSPOON MADE HIM STAND IN THE CORNER! THEN HIS CLASSMATES COULDN'T SEE HIS EYES FILLING WITH TEARS..
MAGOG'LL WAIT FOR ME.. AND I WON'T COME! MAYBE HE'LL GET ANGRY... AND I'LL NEVER SEE HIM AGAIN!
THE HOURS DRAGGED BY AND SOON SCHOOL WAS OVER! THE SILENCE SURROUNDING THE SOMBRE SCHOOL BUILDING WAS SUDDENLY SHATTERED BY LAUGHTER AND SHOUTING AS THE CHILDREN ERUPTED FROM THE DOORWAY! BUT INSIDE, ANDY FIELD WAS WRITING HIS FIFTH 'I WILL NEVER LIE AGAIN'.
AND YOU CAN TELL YOUR MOTHER JUST WHY I KEPT YOU! NO! YOU MIGHT MAKE UP SOME FANTASTIC STORY! YOU TELL HER I'LL BE OVER TO SEE HER TOMORROW! I'LL TELL HER MYSELF!
ANDY'S HAND PAINED HIM A LITTLE AS HE MADE HIS WAY OUT OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING! ONE HUNDRED TIMES IS AN AWFUL LOT OF WRITING! FASTER AND FASTER HIS LITTLE LEGS BEGAN TO MOVE UNTIL HE WAS RUNNING FULL SPEED DOWN THE STREETS..
OH, MAGOG! I HOPE YOU WAITED! I HOPE SO!
3


THE REXT DAY MAS SATURDAY! IR THE AFTERNOOH, ANDY'S MOTHER HAD A VISITOR... ANDY'S TEACHER, MR MITHERSPOON.
AND SINCE ARDY HAS RO FATHER, IT IS RATHER DIFFICULT, MISTER MITHERSPOOR!
I URDERSTARD, MRS. FIELD, SUT THAT IS NO EXCUSE FOR HIS LYING!
AHDY DOESN'T MEAN TO LIE, MISTER MITHERSPOON! IT'S JUST THAT HE HAS A VIVIO IMAGINATION! THIS... THIS 'NAGOS' PERSON JUST SEEMS REAL TO HIM!
SUT HE'S SEEH CONTINUALLY LATE FOR SCHOOL! THERE IS NO REASON FOR TARDINESS!
ANDY IS LONELY, MR MITHERSPOOH! I HAVE TO WORR TO MAKE ENDS MEET! HE DOESR'T SEE MUCH OF ME! PLEASE OOR'T BE TOO HARD OR THE SOY!
YOU'RE EXACTLY LIKE EVERY OTHER MOTHER, MRS. FIELD! YOUR LITTLE 'DARLING' IS ALWAYS RIGHT!
WELL, RO STUDERT OF MINE LIES TO ME! I HAVE THE RIGHT TO WHIP THE SOY ARO THE NEXT TIME HE LIES TO ME, I WILL!
YOU'O SETTER NOT, MISTER MITHERSPOON!
ANDY! WHERE HAVE YOU SEEN?
LONDON, MOMMY! MAGOS ARO I VISITED BUCKINGHAM PALACE!
THERE! YOU SEE? HE EVEN LIES TO YOU!
PLEASE, MISTER WITHERSPOON!
..ARO YOU'D SETTER NOT WHIP ME, MISTER WITHERSPOON! I TOLD MAGOS ALL ABOUT YOU! YOU KROW WHAT HE SAID?
HE SAID IF YOU EVER HARM ME, HE'LL COME ARO EAT YOU UP! THAT'S WHAT HE SAID!
4


MISTER WITHERSPOON TURNED, PICKED UP HIS HAT, AND...
I THINK YOU UNDERSTAND MY POSITION, MRS. FIELD! GOOD-DAY!
AFTER MR. WITHERSPOON LEFT, MRS. FIELD TOOK ANDY'S HAND...
ANDY! WHAT AM I GOING TO DO WITH YOU?
WHY, MOMMY? DID I SAY SOMETHING WRONG?
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TOLD MISTER WITHERSPOON ABOUT BEING EATEN UP!
BUT, MOMMY! THAT'S WHAT MAGOG SAID!
MONDAY DAWNED BRIGHT AND CLEAN! JUNE IS SUCH A WONDERFUL MONTH FOR CHILDREN... SO CLOSE TO SUMMER VACATION! ANDY HOPPED OUT OF BED AND DRESSED QUICKLY...
ANDY! YOU'RE AWFULLY EARLY FOR SCHOOL!
I WANT TO BE! THEN, IF MAGOG AND I DECIDE TO GO SOMEPLACE, WE'LL BET BACK IN TIME!
BUT, ALAS... IT WAS NINE-THIRTY WHEN ANDY OPENED THE BIG OAK DOOR TO THE SCHOOL...
GOLLY! GOLLY SEE! LATE AGAIN...
THERE WAS AN AWKWARD MOMENT OF SILENCE AS ANDY STOOD IN THE DOORWAY OF THE CLASSROOM! ALL EYES WERE UPON HIM AS HE ENTERED! THEN MISTER WITHERSPOON SPOKE...
YOU'RE...LATE AGAIN, ANDY!
I KNOW!
MAGOG?
UH-NUH!


MISTER WITHERSPOON REACHED FOR THE GREEN SWITCH HE HAD CUT JUST THAT MORNING.
WENT SOMEPLACE... DID YOU?
UH-HUH! EGYPT!
AROT EYED THE SWITCH AS MISTER WITHERSPOON LED HIM TO THE WARDROBE ROOM.
DID YOU SEE THE PYRAMIDS?
UH-HUH! AND THE SPHINX! YOU'RE NOT GONNA WHIP ME, ARE YOU, MISTER WITHERSPOON?
OF COURSE I AM! I'M GOING TO TEACH YOU ONCE AND FOR ALL... NOT TO LIE!
BUT MAGOG SAID IF YOU NAME ME, HE'D COME AND EAT YOU UP!
MR. WITHERSPOON LED AROT INTO THE WARDROBE ROOM! HE LEFT THE DOOR SLIGHTLY AJAR SO THAT THE OTHER CHILDREN COULD HEAR! THAT WOULD ASSERT HIS AUTHORITY! THERE WAS A SHARP SNAP AS THE SWITCH CAME DOWN, AND AROT WHIMPERED
HE'S... WHIPPIN' HIM!
GOLLY, SEE!
SUDDENLY THE SCHOOLROOM WAS FILLED WITH AN AGONIZING SCREAM...
CRIPES!
WHAT WAS THAT?
YAAAAAAGGGHHHH...
THE DOOR TO THE WARDROBE ROOM OPENED AND AROT CAME OUT! A TEAR RAN SLOWLY DOWN HIS CHEEK...
I TOLD HIM SOB... THAT MAGOG WOULD COME AND EAT HIM UP BUT HE WHIPPED ME ANYWAY!
THE OTHER CHILDREN RUSHED FROM THEIR DESKS AND CROWDED AROUND THE WARDROBE ROOM DOOR! ALL THAT WAS LEFT OF MISTER WITHERSPOON WAS HIS RIGHT HAND... STILL CLUTCHING THE SWITCH! IT HAD BEEN CHEWED OFF AT THE WRIST!
HEE! HEE! AND THAT'S MY TALE OF ANOY AND HIS FRIEND, MAGOG! POOR OLD MISTER WITHERSPOON! HE HAD NO IMAGINATION! WELL, NOW HE BELIEVES AROT! HE'S CONVINCED MAGOG EXISTS! AFTER ALL, HE'S GETTING THE INSIDE STORY, ISN'T HE? HEE, HEE! NOW, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THAT CREEP, THE VAULT-KEEPER!
3

THE VAULT OF HORROR!



PFAH! NOW THAT YOU'VE FINISHED THAT WISHY-WASHY POT OF GOOK THE *OLD WITCH* BREWED FOR YOU, I'M SURE YOU'LL WELCOME A *REAL* HORRIFYING TALE! AND THAT'S JUST WHAT I HAVE PREPARED FOR YOU! SO GET READY, FRIENDS... BECAUSE THIS *NERVE-CRACKING* STORY FROM MY PRIVATE LIBRARY TAKES US TO *IRELAND*, AND GIVES US AN OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR THE TERRIFYING WAIL OF *THE* HOWLING BANSHEE!



THROUGH THE BLANKET OF FOG THAT ENVELOPED THE LITTLE VILLAGE OF KILDARE IN IRELAND, THE SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS HERALDED THE APPROACH OF THE STRANGER TO THE COTTAGE DOOR...



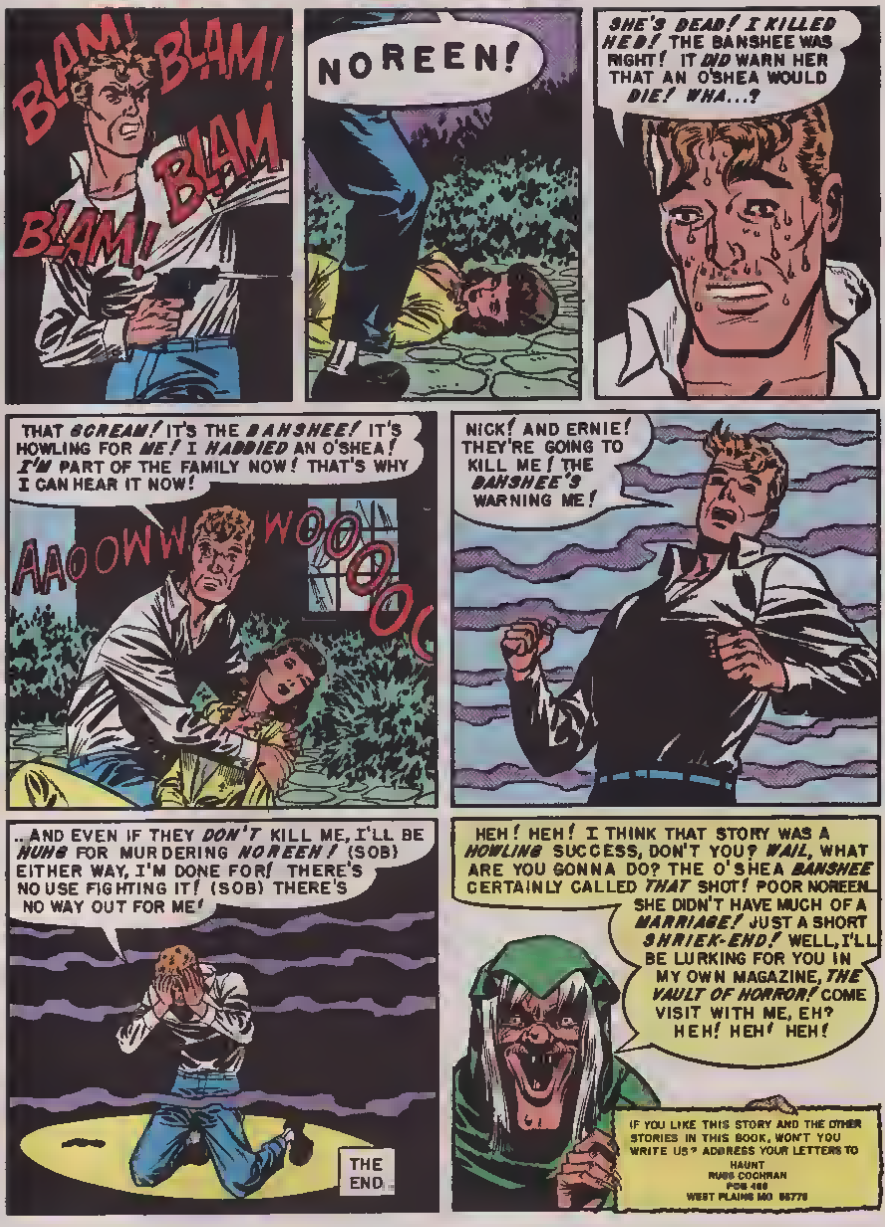

GOOD EVENING! I'M PAT BRADY. FROM AMERICA! ARE YOU...?
WELL! COME IN, LAD! COME IN! 'TIS LONG THAT WE'VE WAITED FOR YE!
YOU MUST BE TIM O'SHEA. MY FATHER'S FRIEND! YOU RECEIVED MY CABLEGRAM?
AYE! AYE! AND 'TIS GLAD I AM THAT YE'LL BE STAYIN' WITH US! COME, SIT DOWN, LAD!
I KNEW YIR PARENTS WELL, PATRICK! 'TIS SAD THAT THEY DIED WHEN YE WAS SUCH A WEE TOT!
YES! I GREW UP IN AN ORPHANAGE UNTIL I WAS OLD ENOUGH TO GET A JOB!
OH? AND WHAT KIND OF WORK WOULD YE BE DOIN'?
WELL ER..I GUESS YOU COULD SAY I WAS IN THE PUBLISHING FIELD! BUT THINGS DIDN'T GO WELL SO I DECIDED TO TAKE A TRIP ER FOR MY HEALTH!
HEH! HEH! PAT WASN'T ACTUALLY LYING, MIND YOU BUT HE DID STRETCH THE TRUTH A BIT! YOU SEE, IN NEW YORK HE HAD BEEN A BOOKIE FOR A HUGE GAMBLING SYNDICATE.
FATHER?
OH... NOREEN! COME HERE, CHILD! I WANT YE TE MEET PAT BRADY. THE LAD FROM AMERICA! PATRICK THIS IS ME DAUGHTER.
HELLO, NOREEN.
T TOP O' THE EVENIN' TO YE PATRICK.
WELL, THAT WAS HOW PAT BRADY ARRIVED IN IRELAND, AND HOW HE MET NOREEN. THEY FELL IN LOVE QUICKLY, AND AS TIME PASSED, PAT GREW TO LIKE HIS NEW LIFE.
OH, PATRICK 'TIS SO FOINE YOU'RE DOIN' IN FATHER'S OFFICE.
I KNOW, HONEY. SOON, MAYBE WE WILL BE ABLE TO GET MARRIED!
2


YES, PAT WAS A HAPPY MAN! THE PEACEFUL CONTENTMENT HE FELT WAS SUCH A WONDERFUL CHANGE FROM THE HECTIC, FRIGHTENED LIFE HE'D LED JUST A SHORT WHILE BEFORE! HEH! BUT HIS HAPPINESS WAS SHORT-LIVED..
PAROON ME! GOT A MATCH?
EH?.. OH, SURE!
NICK! ERNIE!
HI YA, KIO!
YEH! HI YA! LONG TIME NO SEE!
WHAT DO YOU GUYS WANT? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
...BOSS SENT US, KIO. TOOK US A WHILE TO FIND YOU. TH' BOSS WANTS US TO PAY YOU OFF, KID.
YEH! BUT GOOD!
NO! I DION'T SQUEAL TO THE COPS! IT WAS SOMEONE ELSE! I DIDN'T DO IT!
BOSS THINKS YA DID. HE DON'T LIKE PUNKS THAT CROSS HIM AN THEN GOP A BREEZE.
YEH!
BUT YOU WOULDN'T DO IT HERE! NOT NOW! THERE'S THERE'S TOO MANY PEOPLE
I KNOW, KIO, I KNOW. NOT HERE... NOT NOW. BUT SOME TIME.. SOMEWHERE TH' BOSS WANTS US T' PAY YOU OFF, KIO.
YEH! BUT GOOD!
3


FROM THAT MOMENT ON, PAT WAS A DIFFERENT MAN. FEAR GROWOED HIS EVERY HOUR, AND DEATH FOLLOWED HIS EVERY STEP! ONE EVENING...
NOREEN, I WANT TO TELL YOU SOMETHING ABOUT MY PAST.
SURE, AND 'TIS WILLING I AM TE LISTEN... WAIT! WHAT'S THAT?
WHAT? WHAT DID YOU HEAR?
THE BANSHEE! 'TIS THE WAIL OF THE BANSHEE I HEAR! TH' SAINTS PRESARVE US. 'TIS OUR FAMILY BANSHEE FORTELLIN' THE DEATH OF AN O'SHEA!
NOHSEHSE! THERE'S NO SUCH THING!
'TIS WROHG YOU ARE, PAT! I CAN HEAR IT...WAILIN' AND A-HOWLING! PATRICK! 'TIS FRIGHTEHED I AM!
CUT IT OUT! IF YOU CAN HEAR THAT BANSHEE, THEN WHY OON'T I?
YOU'RE NOT MY KIN, PATRICK. ONLY CERTAIN FAMILIES HAVE BANSHEES, AND 'TIS ONLY THEIR KIN WHO ARE ABLE TO HEAR IT!
I OON'T HEAR IT, NOW...
YOU NEVER DID HEAR IT! THERE'S NO SUCH THING, I TELL YOU! YOUR IMAGINATION'S PLAYING TRICKS ON YOU!
I HAVE ENOUGH WORRIES WITHOUT YOU TALKING LIKE CRAZY ABOUT A BANSHEE!
BUT, PATRICK! I CAN SEE THAT YE OON'T UNDERSTAND, BUT 'TIS TRUE, 'TIS TRUE!
I'VE HEARD IT BEFORE! THE LAST TIME I HEARD IT WAS JUST BEFORE ME MATHER DIED! OH, MY PATRICK!
HUTS! I TELL YOU THERE'S NO SUCH THING!
4


IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED, PAT BRADY LED A HECTIC LIFE...
THWOK!
RAT-A-TAT TAT TAT
AND WHENEVER HE FELT SAFE IN THE ARMS OF NOREEN...
IN A FEW MORE DAYS WE'LL BE MARRIED, SWEETHEART! HAPPY?
SURE AND YE KNOW I AM. WAIT! I HEAR THE BANSHEE!
FOR PETE'S SAKE, ARE YOU GOING TO START THAT AGAIN?
BUT PATRICK! I HEAR IT! 'TIS WARNING ME THAT AN O'SHEA WILL DIE!
ME FATHER'S OLD, PATRICK! AND HE'S NOT BEEN WELL! I WORRY!
STOP TALKING LIKE THAT! THERE'S NO SUCH THING, YOU HEAR? NO SUCH THING!
AND ALONE, IN THE QUIET OF HIS ROOM HE SAT, GUN IN HAND, SWEATING...STARTING AT EVEN THE SLIGHTEST SOUND...WAITING FOR WHAT HE THOUGHT WAS INEVITABLE
...ANOTHER NIGHT WITHOUT SLEEP! NICK AND ERNIE ARE GOING TO COME FOR ME SOONER OR LATER
WHAT ARE THEY WAITING FOR?
5


HEH! HEH! BY THE TIME PAT'S WEDDING DAY ARRIVED, HE WAS A NERVOUS WRECK! I'VE SEEN JITTERY BRIDEGROOMS, BUT HE WAS WORSE THAN ANY! HE WAS SURE NICK AND ERNIE WOULD BE MEAN ENOUGH TO FINISH THEIR JOB BEFORE THE DAY WAS OVER...
...BUT NOTHING HAPPENED!
WHAT A HONEYMOON! I'M SO ON EDGE I CAN'T STAY PUT!
AYE! AND I, TOO, AM THE SAME!
THIS WAITING IS DRIVING ME CRAZY! IF IT LASTS MUCH LONGER, I'LL CRACK!
YOU'RE ON EDGE? WHAT'VE YOU GOT TO BE JITTERY ABOUT?
'TIS THE BANSHEE DI'M THINKIN' OF!
BANSHEE! BANSHEE! YOU AND YOUR COCK-EYED BANSHEE! YOU LITTLE IDIOT! DON'T YOU KNOW MY LIFE IS IN DANGER? WAIT! I HEARD A NOISE!
WHAT IS IT? YOU LOOK SO FRIGHTENED!
IT'S NICK AND ERNIE! THEY'VE COME TO KILL ME! THEY'RE OUTSIDE THE HOUSE! I HEARD THEM!
WELL, I'M READY FOR THEM! I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THIS! I'LL GO MEET THEM! I'LL BLOW THEIR BRAINS OUT!
PATRICK! DON'T GO! PLEASE! WAIT!
OUT INTO THE SILENT DARKNESS WENT PAT. MOVING QUIETLY THROUGH THE FOLIAGE, HE LISTENED INTENTLY FOR ANY SOUND...
BLASTED FOG! CAN'T SEE A THING!..WHA...?
BEHIND ME! SOMEONE'S MOVING UP BEHIND ME!
6


BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!
NOREEN!
SHE'S DEAD! I KILLED HER! THE BANSHEE WAS RIGHT! IT DID WARN HER THAT AN O'SHEA WOULD DIE! WHA...?
THAT SCREAM! IT'S THE BANSHEE! IT'S HOWLING FOR ME! I HADDIED AN O'SHEA! I'M PART OF THE FAMILY NOW! THAT'S WHY I CAN HEAR IT NOW!
AAOOWW WOOOOO
NICK! AND ERNIE! THEY'RE GOING TO KILL ME! THE BANSHEE'S WARNING ME!
..AND EVEN IF THEY DON'T KILL ME, I'LL BE HUNG FOR MURDERING NOREEN! (SOB) EITHER WAY, I'M DONE FOR! THERE'S NO USE FIGHTING IT! (SOB) THERE'S NO WAY OUT FOR ME!
THE END
HEH! HEH! I THINK THAT STORY WAS A HOWLING SUCCESS, DON'T YOU? WAIL, WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO? THE O'SHEA BANSHEE CERTAINLY CALLED THAT SHOT! POOR NOREEN SHE DIDN'T HAVE MUCH OF A MARRIAGE! JUST A SHORT SHRIEK-END! WELL, I'LL BE LURKING FOR YOU IN MY OWN MAGAZINE, THE VAULT OF HORROR! COME VISIT WITH ME, EH? HEH! HEH! HEH!
IF YOU LIKE THIS STORY AND THE OTHER STORIES IN THIS BOOK, WON'T YOU WRITE US? ADDRESS YOUR LETTERS TO
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SHOCK #4



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Haunt of Fear (USPS 009308) Vol. 1, No. 5, August 1994, published quarterly in November, February, May and August by Russ Cochran, Publisher, 202 Ald, West Plains, MO 65775-3532. **Second-class postage paid at West Plains, MO.** Entire contents © 1994 by William M. Gaines, Agent, Inc. Haunt of Fear #6 © 1951 by Fables Publishing Co., Inc. re © 1965 by William M. Gaines, Agent, Inc. All rights reserved. Nothing herein contained may be reproduced without the written permission of William M. Gaines, New York, New York. Annual subscription rate $6 ($12 outside US, payable in US funds). Printed in U.S.A. **Postmaster: send address changes to Haunt of Fear, Russ Cochran, PO Box 469, West Plains, MO 65775-0469.**

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! WELCOME AGAIN, ALL MY DEAR LITTLE *FIENDS!* WELCOME AGAIN TO *THE HAUNT OF FEAR!* COME IN! COME IN! I'VE LIT THE FIRE UNDER MY *CAULDRON* ONCE AGAIN, AND NOW ITS *EVIL BREW* IS *BUBBLING* AND *STEAMING!* JUST SIT YOURSELVES DOWN ON THAT MARBLE SLAB OVER THERE... CUP YOUR LITTLE HANDS IN FRONT OF YOU.. AND YOUR HOSTESS, *THE OLD WITCH,* WILL DISH OUT ANOTHER OF HER *TASTY TALES OF TERROR!* I CALL THIS LITTLE CHILLER-DILLER

HOUNDED TO DEATH!



THE HORRIBLE EVENTS THAT OCCUR IN THIS TALE I AM ABOUT TO TELL YOU BEGAN LONG AGO ON THE VAST ESTATE OF A WEALTHY SPORTSMAN BY THE NAME OF EDWARD G[illegible] THE IMPRESSIVE STRUCTURE THAT SERVED AS THE MAIN HOUSE OF THE SARSON ESTATE WAS SHROUDED IN DARKNESS SAVE FOR ONE LIGHT, HIGH IN A BEDROOM WINDOW. THE BLACKNESS OUTSIDE THE HOUSE WAS FILLED WITH THE BLOOD-CURDLING HOWLS OF COUNTLESS HOUNDS.


THES WHY DON'T YOU GO DOWN AND FEED THEM, EDWARD?
NO! THAT WOULD SPOIL THEM FOR THE HUNT TOMORROW! STARVING HOUNDS CATCH THE FOX!
IT'S CRUEL! CRUEL! YOU STARVE THOSE POOR HURTING DOGS SO THEY'LL SAVAGELY TRACK SOWS A HELPLESS FOX! YOU CALL THAT SPORT?
OF COURSE LISTEN TO THEM! I PITY ANY ONE WHO'D HAPPEN IS TO THEIR KESSELS TONIGHT!
THEY'D RIP HIM TO SHREDS!
TEAR HIM
STOP IT! STOP IT! I HATE THEM! HATE THEM...
YOU HATE ME TOO, DON'T YOU AND? YOU HATE THIS HOUSE ..AND OUR MARRIAGE!
YES! YES! I HATE EVERYTHING ABOUT THIS PLACE! YOU KEEP ME COOPED UP HERE LIKE ONE OF YOUS DOGS! SEVES LET ME SO OUT
SEVER LET ANYONE COME HERE! YOU'SE AFRAID, ARES'T YOU, EDWARD? AFRAID OF LOSING ME! AFRAID I'D FALL IS LOVE WITH SOME ELSE!
YOU BE MINE, ARR! ALL MINE! AND I ISTENO TO MAKE SURE IT STAYS THAT WAY!
IF EVER I FIND YOU AS MUCH AS SMILING AT ANOTHER MAN... I'LL... I'LL KILL HIM!
I WON'T STAND FOR IT! YOU CAN'T KEEP ME LOCKED UP LIKE THIS! I WANT TO ENJOY MYSELF ..DO THINGS SET AWAY FROM THIS... THIS PLACE FOR A CRASSE!
DO YOU? GOOD! THEN I'LL LET YOU COME ON THE HUNT TOMORROW! YOU'LL LIKE THAT, WON'T YOU?
EDWARD! YOU KNOW I DON'T LIKE HUNTING!


SUIT YOURSELF, DEAN! ONLY TOU SAID YOU WANTED TO MET OUT FOR A CHANGE!
ALL RIGHT! I'LL COME! AT LEAST IT WILL BE BETTER THAN... SITTING AROUND HERE ALL DAY!
THE NEXT DAY, EDWARD DARSON, HIS LOVELY WIFE, AND HIS NEIGHBORN FROM AROUND THE COUNTRYSIDE RATHERED AT THE HUNT CLUB...
YOUR PACK OF HOUNDS LOOK VERY FEROCIOUS TODAY, DARSON!
THEY OUGHT TO BE! THEY DIDN'T HAVE A BITE TO EAT YESTERDAY!
AT A SIGNAL FROM EDWARD, THE YELPING, DROOLING DOGS WERE RELEASED ..AND THEY STREAKED ACROSS THE FIELD, HOWLING...
THERE THEY GO!
WE'RE OFF!
THE RED-COATED HORSEMEN GALLOPED AFTER THE BAYING DOGS, HORNS BLARING, SHOUTING...
THEY'VE GOT THE SCENT!
THERE GOES THE LITTLE DEVIL ..OUT THERE NEAR THE FENCE-LINE
BACK AT THE HUNT CLUB, ANN DARSON REINED UP HER HORSE AND DISMOUNTED! SHE SAT DOWN WEARILY ON A STONE BENCH, LISTENING TO THE FADING DIN OF THE HUNT
HELLO!
I.. OH! YOU STARTLED ME!
THE STRANGER WAS TALL AND, ANN THOUGHT, QUITE HANDSOME! HE SMILED DOWN AT HER
MY NAME'S STEVE BAXTER! WHAT'S YOURS?
ANN DARSON! WHY AREN'T YOU ON THE HUNT, MR. BAXTER?
CALL ME STEVE! CAN'T! GOT A BAD TICKER! THE DOCTOR SAYS IT COULD KILL ME IF I STRAINED IT TOO MUCH! NAY! 'DARSON'..! YOU MUST BE EDDARSON'S WIFE!
YES! I AM! WHY THE SURPRISED LOOK?


OH, I'M SORRY! I DIDN'T MEAN TO STARE! IT'S JUST THAT... I THOUGHT ED'S WIFE WOULD BE... MUCH OLDER! I DON'T BLAME HIM FOR HIDING YOU THE WAY HE DOES!
I... I HATE HIM FOR IT! HE TREATS ME LIKE ONE OF HIS DOGS!
IF YOU WERE MY WIFE, I'D WANT THE WHOLE WORLD TO SEE HOW BEAUTIFUL YOU ARE!
EDWARD'S THE JEALOUS TYPE! HE'S AFRAID HE'D LOSE ME!
STEVE MOVED CLOSE TO ANN LOOKING DEEP INTO HER EYES...
BUT... THERE'S NO REASON FOR HIM TO FEEL THAT WAY, IS THERE, ANN?
NOT UP TO... NOW!
STEVE'S BREATH WAS WARM ON ANN'S CHEEK! SHE FELT HER HEART PUMPING HARDER... HARDER.
...AND NOW, ANN?
I... I DON'T KNOW!
SUDDENLY, SHE WAS IN HIS ARMS, HER LIPS AGAINST HIS...
STEVE!
ANN... ANN...
THE GALLOPING SOUND OF APPROACHING HORSES TORE THEM APART! THE HUNT WAS RETURNING!
WHEN CAN I SEE YOU AGAIN, ANN?
DON'T, PLEASE! IF EDWARD FOUND OUT, HE'D... KILL YOU!
THE GLEAMING, SWEAT-COVERED HORSES WITH THEIR RED-COATED RIDERS PULLED UP BEFORE THE HUNT CLUB...
ANN! WHY DID YOU LEAVE THE HUNT?
I'M SORRY, EDWARD! I... I DIDN'T THINK I COULD DO IT! IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I RODE
YOUR WIFE AND I HAVE BEEN CHATTING, CARSON!


EDWARD GARSON GLARED FIERCELY AT STEVE BAXTER.
AND WHY WEREN'T YOU ON THE HUNT, MR. BAXTER?
YOU REMEMBER, ED! MY HEART! IT'S ON THE GUN!
GET ON YOUR HORSE, ANN! WE'RE GOING HOME!
YES, EDWARD!
GOOD MORNING, MRS GARSON! THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTERESTING COMPANY!
LATER, BACK AT THE GARSON MANSION
IT WAS NOTHING, EDWARD! BELIEVE ME! WE JUST TALKED! IT WAS HARMLESS!
I HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT ANN! FOR HIS SAKE!
THE NEXT DAY, WHILE EDWARD WAS AWAY ON BUSINESS
STEVE!
MAY I COME IN, ANN?
PLEASE, STEVE! IF EDWARD CATCHES YOU, HE'LL
HE'S GONE INTO THE CITY! I SAW HIM GET ON THE TRAIN! WE'VE GOT TWO HOURS... AT LEAST!
A SURGE OF EMOTION THAT SHE COULDN'T FIGHT SWEPT OVER ANN AND SHE FLUNG HERSELF INTO STEVEN'S ARMS
ANN DEAREST!
OH, STEVE! STEVE! I'D HOPED YOU'D COME!
LATER
YOU'D BETTER GO, STEVE! IF EDWARD COMES HOME AND FINDS YOU HERE...
BUT, I'LL WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN! CALL ME, DEAREST... CALL ME THE NEXT TIME HE GOES AWAY!
5


AND SO, THE TWO LOVERS BEGAN TO SEE EACH OTHER EVERY CHANCE THEY COULD! WHEN EDWARD WOULD LEAVE ON A BUSINESS TRIP, ANN WOULD PHONE STEVE! THEY'D BE TOGETHER EVERY MINUTE EDWARD WAS AWAY! THEN THEY WOULD PART! FINALLY... ONE NIGHT...
LISTEN TO THOSE AWFUL HOUNDS! THEY HAVEN'T BEEN FED FOR TWO DAYS!
BUT, ANN! WHY NOT? JUST BECAUSE EDWARD'S AWAY!
HE LEFT ORDERS! THERE'S GOING TO BE A HUNT WHEN HE COMES BACK AND HE WANTS THEM GOOD AND HUNGRY!
THEY SOUND VICIOUS.
PLEASE, STEVE! DON'T TALK ABOUT THEM! EDWARD WILL BE HOME TOMORROW! KISS ME...
ANN... DEAREST!... WHAT'S THAT?
IT WAS THE SOUND OF A KEY IN THE FRONT DOOR LOCK...
IT'S MY HUSBAND! HE'S HOME EARLIER THAN HE SAID! IF HE CATCHES US HERE, HE'LL KILL YOU!
THERE'S NO TIME TO HIDE...
QUICKLY! LIE DOWN ON THE FLOOR! PRETEND YOU HAD A HEART ATTACK! I'LL THINK OF SOMETHING!
YOU'D BETTER MAKE IT GOOD! HERE GOES!
STEVE STRETCHED OUT ON THE FLOOR AS THE FRONT DOOR SWUNG OPEN! EDWARD GARSON STOOD FRAMED IN IT... HIS EYES BLAZING...
OH, EDWARD! THANK GOD YOU'VE COME! HE'S.. DEAD!
DEAD! WHAT HAPPENED?


ANN SOBBED OUT HER STORY AS EDWARD STARED AT THE PROSTRATE FORM ON THE FLOOR
HE FORCED HIS WAY IN! HE SAID HE'D BEEN THINKING ABOUT ME EVEN SINCE HE MET ME AT THE HUNT! HE... TRIED TO... MOLEST ME! I FOUGHT! SUDDENLY ...HE STIFFENED UP! THEN HE FELL DOWN...LIKE THAT DEAD!
OH?
IT MUST HAVE BEEN HIS HEART! YOU REMEMBER? HE SAID HE COULDN'T GO ON THIS HUNT BECAUSE OF HIS HEART! WHAT WILL WE DO, EDWARD? THINK OF THE SCANDAL!
YES! WE CAN'T AFFORD TO HAVE A SCANDAL! I... I MUST GET HIM OUT OF HERE!
ANN SMILED TO HERSELF! EDWARD, THE OLD FOOL, WAS FALLING FOR HER STORY...
WHY NOT TAKE HIS BODY THIS ROAD ABOUT FOUR MILES AND DROP IT...
YES! THEY'LL THINK HE HAD THE HEART ATTACK WHILE HE WAS OUT WALKING!
EDWARD LIFTED STEVEN'S LIMP FORM AND SLUNG IT OVER HIS SHOULDERS
YOU GO TO YOUR ROOM! WE'LL TALK ABOUT THIS FURTHER WHEN I GET BACK!
YES, EDWARD!
EDWARD CARRIED STEVEN'S BODY OUT OF THE HOUSE AND ACROSS THE LARGE WELL-KEPT LAWNS TOWARDS THE GARAGE...
DEAD, EH? THINK I'M A FOOL, EH? THINK I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON?
THE STARVED HUNTING HOUNDS YELPED AND HOWLED AS EDWARD PASSED CLOSE TO THEIR KENNELS
THEY'RE SO HUNGRY, THEY'D TEAR A MAN TO SHREDS...
SUDDENLY EDWARD FLUNG STEVEN OVER THE HIGH FENCE INTO THE MIDST OF THE SNARLING, SLOBBERING, SCRAMBLING HOUNDS
THEY'D EVEN TEAR A DEAD MAN TO SHREDS—OR EVEN A MAN PLAYING DEAD
AAAAAAAAAA!
7

EDWARD GARSON TURNED AND WALKED BACK TO THE HOUSE. HE LISTENED WHILE STEVEN'S SCREAMS ENDED IN A CHOKING COUGH AS THE SLASHING FANGS OF THE STARVED HOUNDS RIPPED AND TORE

AND NOW TO TAKE CARE OF MY *LOVING* WIFE!

UPSTAIRS IN HER ROOM, ANN HEARD THE BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAMS AND REALIZED WHAT HER HUSBAND HAD DONE.

HE *KNEW!* HE *KNEW* STEVEN WAS *ALIVE!* THE *FIEND!* THE *HORRIBLE FIEND!*

AT THE FOOT OF THE STAIRS LEADING TO ANN'S BEDROOM, EDWARD PAUSED.

THAT'S FUNNY! THE HOUNDS HAVE *STOPPED BARKING!*

OUTSIDE, IN THE FENCED-IN KENNEL, THE PACK OF HOUNDS WHINED AS THEY SKULKED AWAY FROM THEIR VICTIM. BACKED AWAY WITH THEIR BELLIES FLAT AGAINST THE GROUND, THEIR TAILS BETWEEN THEIR HIND-LEGS.

AS EDWARD REACHED THE TOP OF THE STAIRS, ONE OF THE HOUNDS OUTSIDE BEGAN TO HOWL. A CHILLING HOWL THAT ECHOED ACROSS THE NIGHT AIR.

OWWOOOOOOO

WHAT IN BLAZES HAS GOTTEN INTO THOSE BLASTED MUTTS!

SUDDENLY, EDWARD FROZE IN HIS TRACKS! HIS EYES OPENED WIDE IN SHEER HORROR! THE FRONT DOOR DOWNSTAIRS HAD OPENED, AND STUMBLING ACROSS THE MARBLE FOYER AND UP THE STAIRS CAME A *FANG-TORN, SHREDDED CORPSE!* BITS OF FLESH AND BLOOD SOAKED C[illegible]TH FELL AWAY AS IT MOVED UP, UP, UP THE STEPS.

NO! NO! IT CAN'T BE! IT... IT'S STEVEN BAXTER!

HEE, HEE! AND THAT'S MY STORY, KIDDIES! *STEVEN* TOOK GOOD CARE OF EDWARD! WHEN STEVE WAS FINISHED, *EDDIE* LOOKED WORSE THAN *HE* DID! OH? YOU LOOK DOUBTFUL? BELIEVE ME! IT'S *POSSIBLE!* I KNOW! I SAW HIM! OH, AND BY THE WAY! IF YOU'D LIKE A REAL DOSE OF A STONY, *THE VAULT-KEEPER* AWAITS WITH A *YARN* TO *DRIVE* ALL YOU *MANIACS SANE.* I'LL SEE YOU *LATER* IN THIS ISSUE!

THE VAULT OF HORROR!

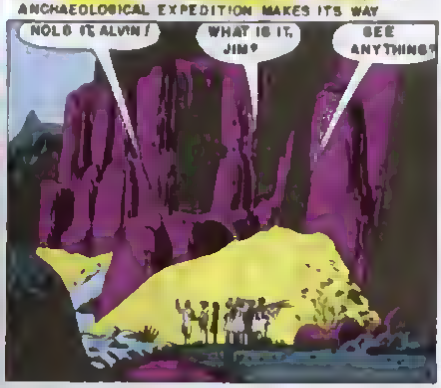
I SEE BY THE MAIL THAT MANY OF YOU LIKE *MUMMY STORIES!* WELL, I'VE GOT A CHILLER-DILLER FOR YOU THIS TIME! COME INTO *THE VAULT OF HORROR!* SIT DOWN NEXT TO ME *THE VAULT KEEPER* AND I'LL BEGIN MY STORY! READY? GOOD! I CALL THIS BLOOD-CURDLER—

THE VERY STRANGE MUMMY!





NORTH OF THE CITY OF COPTOS ON THE LEFT BANK OF THE NILE RIVER IN MODERN DAY EGYPT, OUR STORY BEGINS! AT THE BASE OF THE CLIFFS THAT RISE MAJESTICALLY OVER THE SANDY WASTES, A SMALL ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPEDITION MAKES ITS WAY

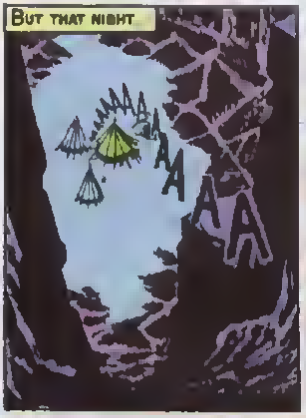



JAMES LORNING, ONE OF THE ARCHAEOLOGISTS, GESTICULATES TOWARDS THE TOWERING CLIFFS...
UP THERE! LOOK! SEE? TO THE LEFT OF THAT BOULDER!
I SEE IT! SOMETHING SHINING!
THE EGYPTIAN PACK-CARRIERS STARE IN HORROR AT THE CLIFF FACE...
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE PORTERS, ABYDOS?
PLACE OF EVIL, SAHIB! NO...NO WANT GO UP THERE!
PLACE OF EVIL? WHY? WHAT'S UP THERE?
DON'T KNOW! NO ONE KNOW! LEGEND SAY... PLACE OF EVIL! MEN NO WANT TO GO!
ALL RIGHT! STAY HERE, THEN! START SETTING UP CAMP! C'MON, ALVIN! WE'LL GO UP AND TAKE A LOOK!
AUNE, JIM! YOU STAY HERE, TOO, EVE!
NOTHING DOING! I'M COMING WITH YOU!
THE TWO MEN AND THE GIRL BEGIN THE DANGEROUS CLIMB WHILE THE NERVOUS EGYPTIANS UNTIE THEIR PACKS AND BEGIN SETTING UP CAMP...
EGYPETITIOUS HEATHENS! I WONDER WHAT THEY'RE AFRAID OF!
PROBABLY JUST A LEGEND WITH NO FOUNDATION IN FACT, ALVIN!
MOST EGYPTIAN LEGENDS ARE TRUE, JIM!
FINALLY THE THREE ARCHAEOLOGISTS REACH A FLAT LEDGE...
LOOK, JIM! THAT'S WHAT WAS SHINING! A METAL PLAQUE!
THERE'S SOME HIEROGLYPHICS SCRATCHED INTO IT! YOU'RE THE LANGUAGE EXPERT, EVE! WHAT'S IT SAY?
IT SAYS...ER...THIS IS THE BURIAL PLACE...OF A PERSON OF EVIL! DO NOT ENTER!
EAT! LOOK! THERE'S AN OPENING BEHIND THIS ROCK!


PAINFULLY, THE EXPLORERS MOVE THE HUGE ROCK ASIDE UNTIL THERE IS ROOM TO SLIP THROUGH..
LOOKS LIKE A TUNNEL! WHAT LUCK! THIS MUST BE ONE OF THE ANCIENT BURIAL TOMBS!
C'MON! YOU GO FIRST! HERE'S A FLASHLIGHT!
BE CAREFUL! YOU KNOW HOW THESE TOMB ENTRANCES ARE USUALLY PLANTED WITH TRAPS AGAINST TRESPASSERS!
THE TUNNEL IS LONG AND LOW! ONLY ONE OF THE ARCHAEOLOGISTS CAN MOVE ALONG IT AT A TIME.. HALF KNEELING... HALF CRAWLING
IT SEEMS TO GO DOWN AT A SLIGHT ANGLE! HOPE WE DON'T DISTURB ANYTHING THAT MIGHT CAUSE A CAVE-IN!
TAKE IT EASY! IT LOOKS PRETTY SOLID!
THIS ISN'T A VERY LADY-LIKE POSITION! DOES IT GO ON LIKE THIS FOR LONG?
AFTER CRAWLING THROUGH THE TUNNEL FOR SEVERAL HUNDRED FEET...
THERE'S AN OPENING AHEAD!
IT'S A LARGE ROOM!
LOOK OUT!
A GLEAMING STEEL BLADE SWINGS DOWN IN A HUGE ARC NARROWLY MISSING THE FACE OF THE LEADING EXPLORER
GOOD LORD!
IT IT MIGHT HAVE SPLIT YOUR HEAD OPEN!
LET'S GO BACK! I'M AFRAID!
CAUTIOUSLY, THE THREE ARCHAEOLOGISTS SLIP UNDER THE LETHAL BLADE AND ENTER INTO THE LARGE UNDERGROUND ROOM..
THE WALLS ARE COVERED WITH HIEROGLYPHICS!
THIS MUST BE THE BURIAL CHAMBER!
YES, BUT..
THIS IS NO PHARAOH'S TOMB! LOOK! NOT A BIT OF JEWELS OR PRECIOUS METAL AROUND!
HERE'S THE MUMMY CASE!
WHY..THAT'S STRANGE! THE MUMMY CASE IS PEGGED SHUT!
I'VE NEVER RUN ACROSS ANYTHING LIKE THIS BEFORE! LET'S OPEN IT UP!
3


WITH THE AID OF THE FEW TOOLS THE ANCHAEOLOGISTS HAVE BROUGHT WITH THEM, THE MUMMY CASE IS PRIED OPEN..
WELL...I'LL BE...
WHAT A FIND!
THE WRAPPINGS ARE ALL ROTTED, BUT THE MUMMY SEEMS PERFECTLY PRESERVED!
CAREFULLY, THE ROTTED DECAYED WINDINGS ARE REMOVED FROM THE MUMMY..
A POOR SPECIMEN OF HUMAN! LOOKS LIKE THEY DIDN'T LIKE THIS GUY MUCH
GASP! LOOK AT HIS FACE!
IMPOSSIBLE! IMPOSSIBLE! THERE'S NO SIGN OF DECAY! THIS MAN LOOKS LIKE HE DIED YESTERDAY...
BUT THE WRAPPINGS...AND HIS COSTUME! THEY'RE DEFINITELY ANCIENT EGYPTIAN! WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF IT, ALVIN?
I'M STUMPED! PERHAPS THE HIEROGLYPHICS ON THE WALLS WILL TELL US SOMETHING!
LOOK, BOYS! IT'S GETTING LATE! WE'D BETTER START BACK! IT WILL BE DARK IN AN HOUR!
YES! COME! I'D HATE TO TRY DESCENDING THAT CLIFF FACE IN DARKNESS!
WE'LL COME BACK UP TOMORROW MORNING!
AS THE LAST TRACE OF DAYLIGHT FADES IN THE WEST, THE WEARY EXPLORERS REACH THEIR CAMP
SAHIB! SAHIB! MY MEN ARE FRIGHTENED! THEY DO NOT WANT TO STAY THE NIGHT...
TELL THEM THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT, ABDOS! NOTHING AT ALL!
BUT... DURING THE NIGHT...
EEEAAGGH
EARLY THE NEXT MORNING
NE...HE'S DEAD!
LOOK! ON HIS NECK! TWO PUNCTURES!
SNAKE-BITE!

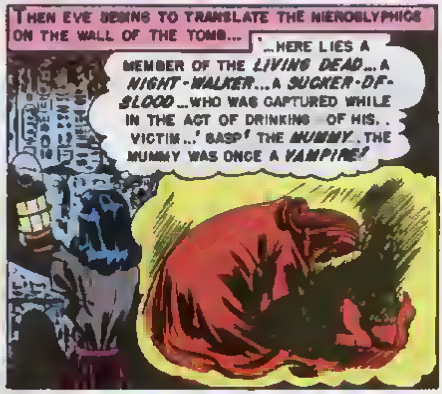

NO, SAHIB! NO SNAKE DO THIS! THIS MAN BLEED TO DEATH... NOT POISONED!
BUT... THERE'S NO BLOOD AROUND..
A VAMPIRE!
WHAT'S THAT, ALVIN? WHAT'D YOU SAY?
I SAID... A VAMPIRE! A VAMPIRE SUCKS BLOOD.
OH, PUT IT OUT, AL! VAMPIRES ARE A MYTH! THEY DON'T EXIST!
THEN HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN HIS DEATH.. ?
LATER AFTER THE NATIVE PORTER IS BURIED...
SAHIB! MY MEN ARE LEAVING! THEY SAY THIS IS A PLACE OF EVIL!
BLAST THEM! SUPERSTITIOUS IDIOTS... LET THEM GO!
NO, WAIT! WE'LL NEED THEM TO CARRY THE MUMMY BACK!
MUMMY? YOU FIND MUMMY?
YES! UP THERE! IT'S A PERFECT SPECIMEN TOO! THE MOST PERFECTLY PRESERVED MUMMY I HAVE EVER SEEN! WE'LL WANT TO... WAIT...
THE TERRIFIED NATIVES GATHER UP THEIR MEAGER BELONGINGS AND RUSH OUT ACROSS THE BURNING SANDS...
WAIT, YOU FOOLS! COME BACK! YOU HAVEN'T BEEN PAID.
THE POOR DEVILS! THEY'RE SCARED SILLY!
S... SO AM I!
LOOK AT THE TIME! WE'VE WASTED THE WHOLE DAY! WE WON'T BE ABLE TO MAKE IT UP THE CLIFF AND BACK BY DARK..
THAT'S TOO SAD! AND I WANTED EVE TO BET TO WORK ON THOSE HIEROGLYPHICS!
TOMORROW.. BRIGHT AND EARLY.. WE'LL START OUT! OKAY?


BUT THAT NIGHT
AAAA


AND THE NEXT MORNING...
GOOD LORD! ALVIN! DEAD! KILLED THE SAME WAY!
IT IS A VAMPIRE! IT IS!


THERE'S NO SUCH THING, EVE! C'MON! WE'LL HAVE TO GUNY HIM!
ALVIN SAID IT WAS A VAMPIRE. I BELIEVE HE WAS RIGHT!


AFTER DIGGING A GRAVE AND BURYING ALVIN, JIM DECIDES THAT IT IS TOO LATE TO START UP THE CLIFF TO THE TOMB DURING THE NIGHT, HOWEVER, WHILE JIM SLEEPS, EVE TAKES A LANTERN AND CLIMBS THE CLIFF FACE...
THE MUMMY CASE! IT'S EMPTY! THE MUMMY'S GONE!


THEN EVE BEGINS TO TRANSLATE THE HIEROGLYPHICS ON THE WALL OF THE TOMB...
'...HERE LIES A MEMBER OF THE LIVING DEAD... A NIGHT-WALKER... A SUCKER-OF-BLOOD... WHO WAS CAPTURED WHILE IN THE ACT OF DRINKING OF HIS.. VICTIM...' GASP! THE MUMMY...THE MUMMY WAS ONCE A VAMPIRE!


EVE CONTINUES...
'...HAVING NO KNOWLEDGE.. OF HOW TO KILL A LIVING DEAD... HE WAS WRAPPED IN THE BURIAL CLOTHS AND PLACED.. ALIVE — IN THE CASKET... THE LID WAS THEN SECURED AND SEALED...' BUT WE... WE UNSEALED IT! THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS... DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO DESTROY A VAMPIRE.. SO THEY NAILED HIM INTO HIS COFFIN! AND WE FREED HIM!


SUDDENLY, EVE HEARS A NOISE BEHIND HER! SHE TURNS.
EEEEEEEE

FOR A MOMENT THE TERRORIZED GIRL IS ROOTED TO THE SPOT AS THE LUMBERING FIGURE.. TRAILING THE ROTTED MUMMY WRAPPINGS...MOVES TOWARD HER! THEN SHE DASHES TOWARD THE TUNNEL

HELP! HELP!

THE HIDEOUS CREATURE SPRINGS AFTER EVE AS SHE DUCKS INTO THE TUNNEL..

OH GOD HELP ME

WHEN EVE FINALLY REACHES THE LEDGE, HER KNEES ARE TORN AND BLEEDING! THE VAMPIRE IS RIGHT BEHIND HER..

JIM JIM

SUDDENLY THE VAMPIRE STOPS! ITS HEAD TURNS TOWARD A STREAK OF GREY IN THE EAST..THE DAWN..

OH, THANK GOD! THANK GOD!

SCREAMING IN FEAR, THE INHUMAN MONSTER RETREATS BACK INTO THE TUNNEL...

EVE! YOU ALL RIGHT UP THERE?

YES, JIM! I'M ALL RIGHT! COME UP! BRING A WOODEN STAKE WITH YOU!

WHEN JIM FINALLY ARRIVES AT THE LEDGE EVE TELLS HIM THE WHOLE STORY! SOON, THE CRACK-CRACK OF STONE ON WOOD FILLS THE ROOM AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL AS JIM DRIVES THE WOODEN STAKE THROUGH THE ANCIENT VAMPIRE'S HEART

LOOK, JIM! THE MUMMY'S FALLING APART! TURNING TO DUST!

IT SHOULD, EVE! IT'S REALLY BEEN DEAD A LONG, LONG TIME!

AND SO MY LITTLE YARN ENDS! I HOPE YOU LIKED IT! WHAT? YOU STILL DON'T BELIEVE IN VAMPIRES? WELL, DON'T TAKE MY WORD FOR IT! GO ASK YOUR MUMMY! AND NOW, WHY NOT READ THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE! SHE'S GOT SUBSCRIPTION INFO, AND TELLS YOU HOW TO OBTAIN BACK ISSUES!



THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE

President and CEO—Stephen A. Geppi

Publisher—Russ Cochran

Dear Old Witch,

Yes! I liked the gruesome tales, especially "Room for One More!" I have a collection on these comics.

I love these gross, sick, scary, disgusting tales!

Lawrence Mineses — Spring Lake, NC

Yes! Yes! —OW

Dear Old Witch,

I have just got done reading your story "A Little Stranger!" and I think it's awesome. I think it's great that you showed your mom and dad and I think you were ugly when you were a baby. I think you and The Crypt-Keeper are the best. Mysteriously yours

Mike McKnight — Cranston, RI

You read the 64-pager RCP HAUNT #1! Available from us as a back issue! No use trying to butter me up with compliments, and then putting The Crypt-Keeper in the same league with me, Mike! I'm the best, HE's a pest, and VK's just a mess!! —OW

Dear Old Witch,

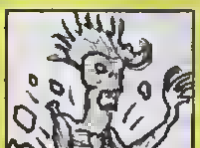
My favorite HAUNT OF FEAR is the one with the "Horror in the School Room" and "The Mummy's Return!"

The picture is from "Room for One More!".

Daniel Raimo — Ettanover, NJ

The old "spring-loaded corpse trick." He-hum. You'll have to come up with something trickier than that to scare me!

Heh, heh! Just kidding! Love the drawing, and thanks! —OW



Your comics are really scary. One of my favorites was RCP HAUNT 5. It was one of your best! When my dad was my age (eleven years old) he used to collect your comics. He threw most of them out, but he found one old HAUNT OF FEAR from 1953 and gave it to me. When I picked up my first issue of HAUNT something caught my eye—your eye! Your left eye always catches my attention. You're more scarier than most witches. That's why I like you a lot. Here are two questions I hope you can answer. Where do you live and do you have any kind of spells?

Stephen Langlois — Rutland, VT

I actually live in The Haunt of Fear, and I do admit to a little nervous tic now and again. —OW

Dear Russ Cochran,

I love your magazines HAUNT, CRYPT, and VAULT. It's my favorite thing since MTV was invented. I think you should work The Old Witch and The Vault Keeper [into] the HBO show with The Crypt-Keeper.

I write to ask The Old Witch to stay. Keep the magazine gory and cool!

Willie Wallace — St. Peters, MO

Sure, I'll stay—I wasn't going anywhere. Wait a minute! Do you know something I don't know?—OW

Dear OW,

My name is Joseph Petrosillo. I am 11 years old. I collect a lot of your magazines. One of my favorite rib-ticklers is "A Grave Gag!!" Here is a picture I drew that I hope you like. Bye now and nighty-nightmares. I AM YOUR #1 FAN!

Joseph Petrosillo — Hicksville, NY

Who told you about my nightlies!? Very good likeness, you've captured the real me. [Must of used a rat trap!—CK] Grrr!! to you, Crypt-Keep! —OW



Dear Old Witch,

Thank you for another great issue of your mag with more great tales. Your mag is much better than that crazy CK's or that sassy VK's. Take issue #7 of HOF for example. "Room For One More!" and "Horror in the School Room" were much better than what those other two creeps had to offer. When I think of some of the teachers I had in school, I could get all agog over having known someone like Magog.

There is a problem, however. How did you get to be so ugly? Some of the living corpses in your stories look better than you do! I'm afraid that if I stare at your face too long, I'll turn to stone. How could it be that something as ugly as you was once a baby? You're disgusting! Have you ever thought about a face lift or maybe a nose-job? How about some Retin-A? Do something. Take some of that text material that use to adorn the pages of EC mags and place it over parts of the mag where your face now appears. That would help beautify things.

Duane Chandler — Houston, TX

You silver-tongued devil! Maybe I should get you and Mike McKnight (above) together and decide who's the biggest flirt! Is it a date, boys? —OW

I am still recovering from the effects of daylight savings time. As I drive to work in the early morning darkness, it seems like there are probably vampires lurking in the shadows everywhere. EC had a vampire story involving

being in the Arctic Circle in " Comes the Dawn!" in HAUNT #26 and they had a vampire story about going to a different time zone in " Dawn's Early Light" in CRYPT #42. But EC never had a vampire story involving daylight savings time. The vampire would say " HEE! HEE! HA! HA! HO!! You forgot that it is DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME! The sun does not rise for yet another hour yet! " And then the vampire would SPRING FORWARD and sink it's teeth into the victim's throat. When finished draining the blood, the vampire would just let go of the body and let it FALL BACK. Get it? SPRING FORWARD? FALL BACK? HA! HA! HA! HA! HAAAAA

Warren Standifird — Sunnyvale CA

Dear Russ,

I preferred the EXTRA-LARGE SIZE COMICS and was sad to see them go. Here is an idea. How about around Christmas time you publish an EXTRA-LARGE TALES FROM THE CRYPT CHRISTMAS SPECIAL. Reprint the seasonal stories that popped up in the EC comics line over the years. Maybe even a Halloween EXTRA LARGE-SIZE EDITION. Just a thought. Regardless, wish you continued luck with your EC comics.

Lawrence Laney Loftin — Monroe LA



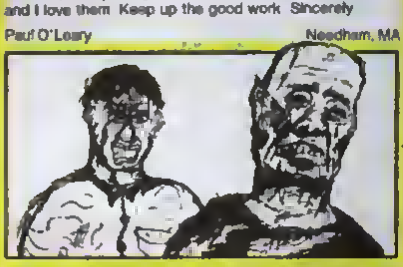
You are talking about the tabloid-sized comic we did experimentally, copies of that EXTRA-LARGE CRYPT are still available for $6 each.

We're sharing your special letterhead illustration with our readers. (Please don't tell that I wore a wig!) —OW

Dear Old Witch

My name is Paul O'Leary. I'm 11 years old and I love your comics. I've been collecting EC's comics for a long time but I especially like yours. I have GLAD HAUNT 1 and 2, and I love them. Keep up the good work. Sincerely

Paul O'Leary — Needham, MA



What is this, picture-day? Everybody's sending me pictures! And yours is a double-header! —OW

Dear Old Witch,

Your story "Horror in the School Room" in issue #7 was the best story I've ever heard in my whole life. Good work. Please print my address.

Dara Conner — 7927 Rambler PL, Cincinnati OH 45231

So, my trip to Ohio to read it to you was worth it. Thanks! —OW

Dear Russ

I'm your biggest fan. I would like an issue of your TALES FROM THE CRYPT. I have number 3 of THE HAUNT OF FEAR. Thank you very much!

Ty Williams — Vinal Haven ME



As you well know by now, you can get all our back issues direct from us. See the little blurb at the end of the letter column for details.

A new twist on putrid-pictures; Construct-A-Creature! Thanks! —OW

Dear Old Witch,

Yo! What's up in The Cauldron? When are you going to show how you became The Old Witch?

Did you ever go out with CK or VK?

I like "The Basket!" It was great. Can you show more "Grim Fairy Tales" please? I think they're the best stories in the whole book.

up

Hey. I like the comic book so far! Keep the great work! What I'm trying to say is, I dig you man.

Brian Kortie — address unknown

I didn't BECOME The Old Witch; I was born it! "Grim Fairy Tales" show up here and there from now on in the 3 horror books. Ya! (Backwards is "Oy!") —OW

This month: INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION #8 and CRIME #8. Next month: The 9th issue of CRYPT, WEIRD SCIENCE and SHOCK. Don't forget VAULT, WEIRD FANTASY and TWO-FISTED! Get them at your local comic book shop or SUBSCRIBE (see our ad in this comic for details)!

BACK ISSUES: CRYPT #1, $3 each (subject to availability). All others up thru issue #8, $1.50 each. Issues #4 and up, $2 each. Add $5 per order ($10 outside US) for S&H.

We want letters! Write to:
HAUNT
RUSS COCHRAN
POB 468
WEST PLAINS MO 65775

THIS COMIC REPRINTS
HAUNT OF FEAR #8 (JUL/AUG 1951)

COVER by Al Feldstein

"Hounded to Death!"	Graham Ingels
" The Very Strange Mummy!"	George Roussos
"Diminishing Returns!"	unknown
"The Irony of Death!"	Jack Davis

We welcome letters of comment. We cannot attempt to acknowledge, publish or answer letters. We edit for clarity, accuracy and length. We automatically withhold street address and zip code unless you clearly state you want them published. We attempt to acknowledge publication of letters, to do so we need your address on the individual letter.

More items of general EC interest, collected into this special column called..

FAN CLUB NEWS!

PRESENTED BY THE VAULT-KEEPER

I would like to present a notice to all EC fans twelve or over:

I wish to start a dream of mine, THE NATIONAL E.C. FAN CLUB. In my club all serious EC fans will receive great benefits including a one year (six issue) subscription to the club's official fanzine—THE NATIONAL E.C. BULLETIN!

Upon joining the club you will receive the first issue of the BULLETIN, a membership certificate, and a free surprise EC comic!

The BULLETIN contains numerous articles and special EC features. There will be plenty of information on EC comics and the HBO series "Tales from the Crypt!" Every issue contains a list of member's names and, if given permission, their addresses. Following the tradition of the original E.C. Fan Addict Club, there will be an E.C. TRADING POST where fans can swap, sell, or even give away their ECs! There has never been a better chance to find those rare and precious originals! The club has many more features which I refuse to divulge (my competitors may decide to take em!). You'll just have to join the club to find out!

Membership to the club costs $14.00. This money is just under enough to cover the publication costs. I make *no* profit! If you decide you want to join and don't have $14.00 (US Currency), you may send just enough for your subscription ($12.00) and send the extra two bucks for your membership package later on.

Also, if you are worried the club magazine SUCKS, you can order a sample issue for $2.00.

Philip M. Smith, President/Founder

THE INTERNATIONAL E.C. FAN CLUB
"The Only Choice For The Serious Fan"
c/o Philip M. Smith, President/Founder
5947 Colgate St.
Philadelphia, PA 19120

PS) Allow four to six weeks for arrival!!!

Friend Ray Funk shares some thots on collecting in general in this special, lengthy letter. —VK

Dear Russ,

I've never written to a comic or pulp or newspaper in all my 60 years so this is a first. True, I did articles in NEAR MINT on comics, but that isn't the same. Also, I do not recall ever mentioning EC's in any articles.

ECs and I go a long way back to the EC meaning Educational Comics. I still have the 50¢ OLD TESTAMENT comic I bought, cut the coupon out and sent my quarter for THE LIFE OF CHRIST (to go back further, I still have the .39 RUDOLPH THE RED NOSED REINDEER put out by Montgomery Ward, but now to the gist of this letter.)

All my life, as far back as I can remember, I've collected comics, BLB pulps, hardbound and paperback books and anything I liked, and bought ECs as they came on the stands.

In the 1960's I decided to go for Fiction House as only WINGS had interested me (also PLANET), but I had always traded them off so only had the last issue of PLANET to start with.

I'd had an older cousin who went to the Army in WW II and he gave me his Disney collection so I continued it and after I'd left home my mother had kept subs up and continued storing them (I was an only child and lived on a farm in Iowa).

I traded all but BIBLE ECs and all Disney (that I didn't give to friends who collected Disney) and extra BLBs of sought after titles until some 20 years later I filled out my Fiction Houses. Then upon divorce after 35 years, I sold off all of my Fiction House, bought all your [hardbound] sets of EC. I have the few reprints of Fiction House and wrote the foreward in [the reprint of?] PLANET #1 which was fouled up by contents being from #5 (didn't know that until after publication as original artwork had gotten mixed around in vault.)

I bought Gladstone's reprints of Disney and they were good, but only bought a couple of their ECs as they weren't good enough. When you sent the [EXTRA-LARGE CRYPT] I was tickled as it was the same size of large reprints of WHIZ, BATMAN and SUPERMAN which I keep stacked in a cabinet. I kept comics in this manner long before plastic bags and they held up over the years.

Presently an Italian publisher is doing BUCK ROGERS in tabloid size and although I have all the old BR comics and FAMOUS FUNNIES, it's like seeing them again as I used to in [the papers]. Kitchen Sink is doing FLASH GORDON not overly-large, but clear good printing as you do, so of course there I go again. When I find reprints I like, I sell or trade off old stuff, as one can't keep everything forever, and if you don't need them what's the use of having them?

I raised 4 boys, and with TV today they don't care for the old stuff that to me was a joy to behold. Also, to those saving and expecting to make a bundle. If everyone had saved (a lot was lost during WW II paper drives) today those old rare comics would be plentiful and not rare. And too, I'm finding that the market for older stuff is falling off as the old collectors have filled out in all they want, have died off or just quit collecting due to excessive high prices.

I know that were I to try starting again I couldn't begin to afford today's prices of the old stuff I advertised runs of comics and BLBs but sold very little, even though I only asked a small amount of list price. The market just isn't there, and the same will be true with reprinted material, as everyone saves it today so that the minute a possible high priced market looms they can unload, which of course will cause prices to plummet, so enjoy it for what it is, instead of worrying about string in hopes of making that elusive bundle. I know that in later years, when I can't work and will need extra income, I will sell in mind for price paid or slightly less, as you cannot eat or drive comics too well.

WHIZ, CAPTAIN MARVEL and SPY SMASHER were favorites with me as a kid, but when I left the farm I gave them away to neighbor kids who were little so that they could enjoy them as I did.

I was at a bookstore when DC brought out SHAZAM! and I bought one to enjoy. While there a fellow entered and bought all on the stand. After he left, the clerk sighed and said "Now I have to re-stock the stand again. Everytime he comes in he takes every issue of SHAZAM! #1 and I've restocked 20 at a time several times now." I asked "How many copies do you have?" and she said, "We only took 500, but if he keeps coming, we'll order a couple thousand more. If need be." SHAZAM! never went up and was short-lived as they switched to modern artwork and killed it. I wonder if that fellow is still hoarding his SHAZAM! #1's hoping to see prices go up?

You can't take it with you, so enjoy it now and stop trying to be a speculator as most seem to be today.

Thanks for your time to read this sensible, keep up the good work and best always,

Ray Funk — Upland, CA

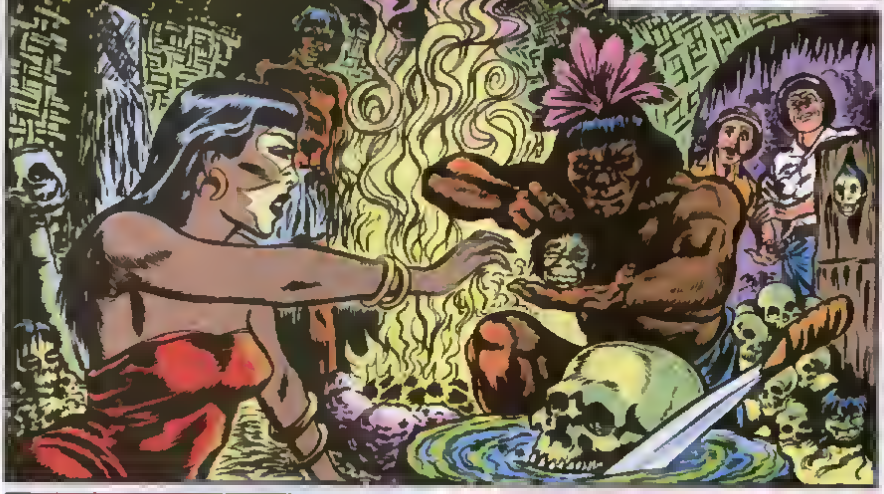
Write to this department like so: FAN CLUB NEWS, RUSS COCHRAN, POB 469, WEST PLAINS, MO 65775

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HERE'S A CUTTING HORROR YARN I'M SURE WILL RATE TOPS WITH YOU! I CALL IT...

DIMINISHING RETURNS!





IN HIS EXPENEIVELY FURNISHED NEW YORK PENTHOUSE APARTMENT, VINCENT PEANDSLEY, THE FAMOUS WORLD EXPLOREE AND PUBLIC ENTERTAINER A PROSPECTIVE CLIENT..

YES, MR. HAGEN! ONLY I KNOW WHERE THE HIDDEN JIVARO DIAMOND FIELD IS LOCATED!

AND THIS DIAMOND COMES FROM THAT FABULOUS FIELD?

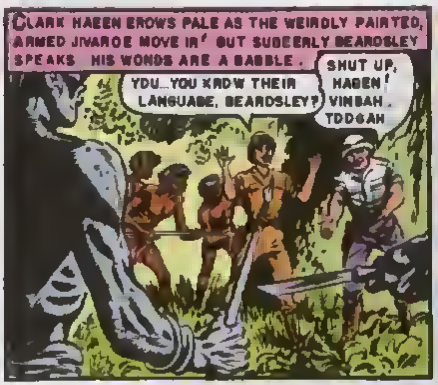
MR. PEANDSLEY'S PURSUIT IS THE WEALTHY SPORTSMAN AND MAN-ABOUT-TOWN, CLARK HAGEN! HE HOLDS A HUGE UNCUT DIAMOND IN HIS WELL-MANICURED HAND..

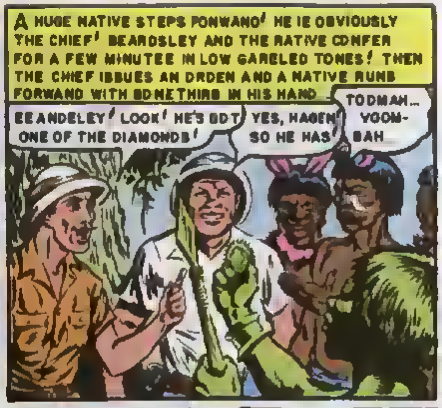
THAT IS CORRECT, MR. HAGEN! I MANAGED TO ESCAPE FROM THE JIVAROS WITH THAT SAMPLE! MY COMPANION WAS CAPTURED..

THIS STONE MUST WEIGH AT LEAST *FORTY CARATS*.. WORTH ABOUT *ONE-HUNDRED-THOUSAND DOLLARS*! AND YOU CLAIM THERE ARE *THOUSANDS* MORE LIKE THIS ONE?

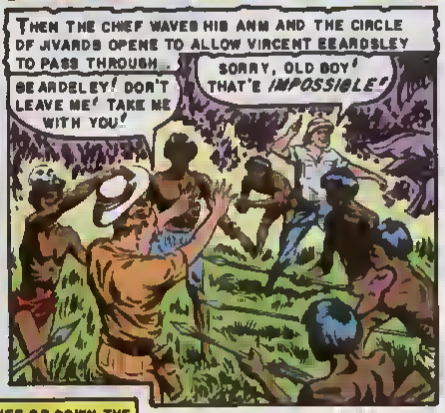

ABSOLUTELT, MR. HADEN! THE JIVAROS EUANO THE FIELO JEALOUELT! YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH THE INFANOUS JIVANOS?
YES! THEY ARE HEAD-HUNTERS, AREN'T THEY?
CORRECT! THET INOULGE IN THE OISTASTEFUL PRACTICE OF SHRINHING HEAOS TO THE SIZE OF A BASEEALL!
OUEH! HOW OIEGUSTING! HOWEVER, I'M WILLING TO RISK IT!
YOU UNDERSTANO, OF COUREE, THAT I HAVE BUIOEO TWO OTHER EXPEOITIONS INTO THE JUNGLES OF SOUTH AMERICA IN QUEST OF THIS FABULOUS OIAMONO FIELO!
YES! I RECALL THET WERE UNSUCCESS-FUL, EH?
TO BAT THE LEAST, MR HABEN! IN BOTH CASEE, WE WERE CAPTUREO BY THE JIVAROS.. BUT...LUCKILY-- I MANABEO TO ESCAPE! THE POOR OEVILS THAT I HAO BHOUGHT THERE WERE NOT AE FORTUNATE!
I SUPPOSE THEIR SHHUNKEN HEAOS NOW AOORN EOHE JIVARO CHIEF'S HUT?
THERE'S NO OOUBT OF IT! NOW, YOU SEE THE RIEKS INVOLVED IN TRYING TO REACH THE OIAMONO FIELO, HAEEH?
LOOK HERE, BEAROBLEY! I'LL MAKE IT WORTH YOUR WHILE! I'LL FINANCE THE WHOLE TRIP PAT YOU FIFTT-THOUSAND FOR YOUR BERVICES ..ANO IF WE FINO WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR WE'LL EPLIT THE TAKE!
ALL RIGHT, MR. HABEN! I'LL BE ELAO TO EUIOE YOU TO THE SPOT! CAN TOU BE READY TO LEAVE IN A WEEK?
I'LL BE REAOT! HERE! LET ME BIVE TOU A CHECK IN AOVANCE! SAY-TEN THOUSANO?
AFTER MR HABEN LEAVES HIS PENTHOUEE HOME, VINCENT BEAROBLEY PICKE UP THE UNCUT OIAMOND ANO OPENS A ENALL STRONG-BOX! INEIOE ARE TWO MORE BTONEE OF EBUAL EIZE
HEH, HEH! SOON I WILL HAVE FOUR OIAMONOS!
2


SEVERAL WEEKS LATER, A SMALL BOAT MOVES SLOWLY UP THE PISTAZA RIVER IN THE UNCHARTED JUNGLES OF EASTERN EQUADOR...
HOW MUCH LONGER BEFORE WE REACH JIVARO COUNTRY, BEARDSLEY?
SOON, NOW! LISTEM!
FROM OVER THE STEAMING JUNGLE COMES THE SOUND OF DISTANT DRUMS.
DOOM-DUM-DUM... DOOM-DUM-DUM.
WHAT'S THAT?
JIVARO DRUMS!
WHERE IS THE DIAMOND FIELD LOCATED, BEARDSLEY?
SOUTH OF THE JIVARO VILLAGE. WE'LL HAVE TO RIDE THE BOAT AND TAKE TO THE BRUSH.. KEEPING WELL OUT OF SIGHT!
WHILE THE JIVARO DRUMS BEAT INCESSANTLY, THE SMALL BOAT MOVES CLOSE TO SHORE. FINALLY NOSING IN AT A DENSELY OVERGROWN SPOT, THE TWO PITH-HELMETED EXPLORERS DISEMBARK...
QUICKLY! HELP ME COVER THE BOAT WITH FERNS AND LEAVES!
DO YOU THINK THEY'VE SPOTTED US, BEARDSLEY?
CAN'T BE SURE! IF THEY DID, WE'RE DONE FOR! THERE! THAT OUGHT TO DO IT! C'MON!
I HOPE WE CAN FIND THE BOAT AGAIN!
THE TWO MEN MOVE THROUGH THE INSECT-RIDDEN UNDERGROWTH! THE JUNGLE IS SILENT NOW! THE DRUMS HAVE STOPPED! THE ONLY SOUND HEARD IS THE OCCASIONAL SHRIEK OF A TROPICAL BIRD AND THE CRACK OF A DRIED TWIG UNDERFOOT! BUT HIDDEN EYES WATCH THE TWO MEN...
BLASTED BUGS!
SH-H-H-H! KEEP YOUR VOICE DOWN!
SUDDENLY THE JUNGLE AROUND THEM BECOMES ALIVE AS HUNDREDS OF DARK-SKINNED NATIVES EMERGE FROM THE BRUSH...
GOOD LORD! JIVAROS!
WE'RE SURROUNDED!
9


CLARK HAGEN GROWS PALE AS THE WEIRDLY PAINTED, ARMED JIVAROS MOVE IN' BUT SUDDENLY BEARDSLEY SPEAKS HIS WORDS ARE A BABBLE.
YOU...YOU KNOW THEIR LANGUAGE, BEARDSLEY?
SHUT UP, HAGEN! VINBAH. TODDAH


A HUGE NATIVE STEPS FORWARD' HE IS OBVIOUSLY THE CHIEF' BEARDSLEY AND THE NATIVE CONFER FOR A FEW MINUTES IN LOW GARBLED TONES! THEN THE CHIEF ISSUES AN ORDER AND A NATIVE RUNS FORWARD WITH SOMETHING IN HIS HAND
BEARDSLEY' LOOK' HE'S GOT ONE OF THE DIAMONDS'
YES, HAGEN' SO HE HAS'
TODMAH... VOOM-BAH


THE NATIVE HANDS THE UNCUT DIAMOND TO VINCENT BEARDSLEY...
BEARDSLEY' WHAT'S GOING ON? I DON'T UNDERSTAND!
YOU WILL, HAGEN. YOU WILL'


THEN THE CHIEF WAVES HIS ARM AND THE CIRCLE OF JIVAROS OPENS TO ALLOW VINCENT BEARDSLEY TO PASS THROUGH...
BEARDSLEY' DON'T LEAVE ME' TAKE ME WITH YOU'
SORRY, OLD BOY' THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!

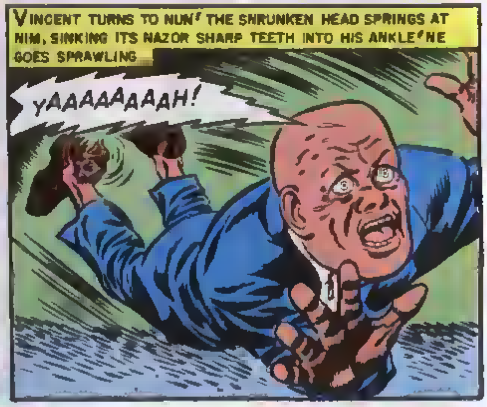

BEARDSLEY SMILES AS HE HOLDS UP THE UNCUT DIAMOND... THAT'S THE DEAL I HAVE WITH THESE DEVILS, HAGEN' ONE DIAMOND...FOR ONE HEAD!

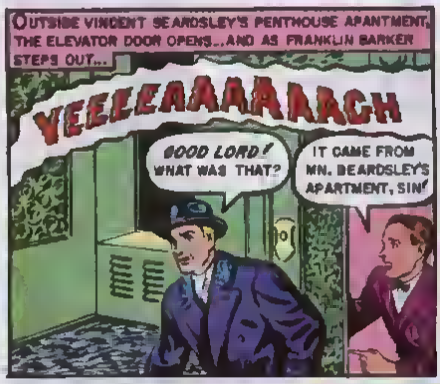

BEARDSLEY MOVES ON DOWN THE JUNGLE TRAIL AS THE NATIVES CLOSE IN ON CLARK HAGEN...
WHY...YOU DIRTY DOUBLE-CROSSING...I'LL GET YOU FOR THIS, BEARDSLEY' I'LL GET YOU!

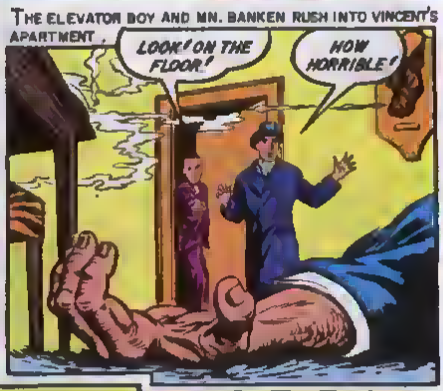

ONE OF THE NATIVES STEPS FORWARD' IN HIS HANDS HE HOLDS A HUGE MACHETE' HE RAISES IT ABOVE HIS HEAD AND...
EEEEEEEEE...
ZOK


SEVERAL MONTHS LATER...BACK IN HIS PENTHOUSE APARTMENT...VINCENT BEARDSLEY ADMIRES HIS COLLECTION OF UNCUT DIAMONDS...
HEH, HEH! FOUR PRICELESS GEMS! AND NOW...I WAIT FOR FRANKLIN BARKER.. MY FIFTH...
SUDDENLY THERE IS A KNOCK AT THE DOOR! BEARDSLEY OPENS IT...
WHY..THERE'S NO ONE HERE!
THEN VINCENT LOOKS DOWN! ON THE FLOOR BEFORE THE DOOR IS A CRUDELY WRAPPED PACKAGE..
WHAT'S THIS? A PACKAGE...ADDRESSED TO ME!
VINCENT PICKS UP THE PACKAGE AND CARRIES IT INSIDE...
STRANGE! I WONDER WHO LEFT IT! I WONDER WHAT'S IN IT!
BEARDSLEY UNWRAPS THE PACKAGE...
OH, MY GOD! IT...IT'S A SHRUNKEN HEAD! HAGEN'S HEAD!
TERRIFIED BY THE REPULSIVE CONTENTS OF THE PACKAGE, BEARDSLEY DROPS IT FROM HIS GRASP AND BACKS AWAY..
WHAT..WHAT KIND OF A MORBID JOKE IS THIS? WHO...WHO'D SEND THIS..
SUDDENLY, AS VINCENT RETREATS FROM THE LOATHSOME HEAD LYING GROTESQUELY ON THE PLUSH CARPET, HE GASPS...
THE EYES! THE EYES ARE OPENING! IT...IT'S STARING AT ME!
8

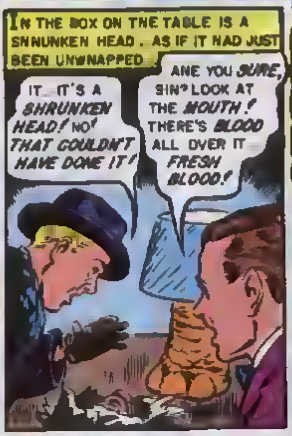

ROOTED TO THE SPOT BY PARALYZING FEAR, VINCENT WATCHES HORRIFIED AS THE WIDE-EYED SHRUNKEN HEAD BEGINS TO ROLL TOWARD HIM.
NO! NO! IT IT'S AFTER ME!

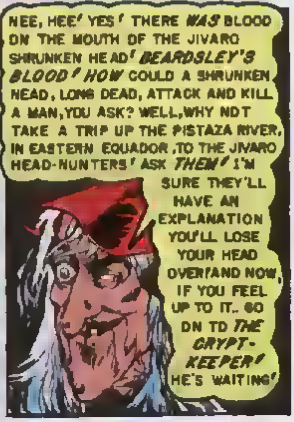

VINCENT TURNS TO RUN! THE SHRUNKEN HEAD SPRINGS AT HIM, SINKING ITS RAZOR SHARP TEETH INTO HIS ANKLE! HE GOES SPRAWLING
yAAAAAAAAH!


OUTSIDE VINCENT BEARDSLEY'S PENTHOUSE APARTMENT, THE ELEVATOR DOOR OPENS...AND AS FRANKLIN BARKER STEPS OUT...
YEEEEAAAAAAAGH
GOOD LORD! WHAT WAS THAT?
IT CAME FROM MR. BEARDSLEY'S APARTMENT, SIR!


THE ELEVATOR BOY AND MR. BARKEN RUSH INTO VINCENT'S APARTMENT.
LOOK! ON THE FLOOR!
HOW HORRIBLE!


HE'S DEAD! HIS NECK HAS BEEN TORN AND SLASHED AS IF HE'D BEEN ATTACKED BY A SMALL FEROCIOUS ANIMAL!
LOOK, SIR! LOOK AT THIS!

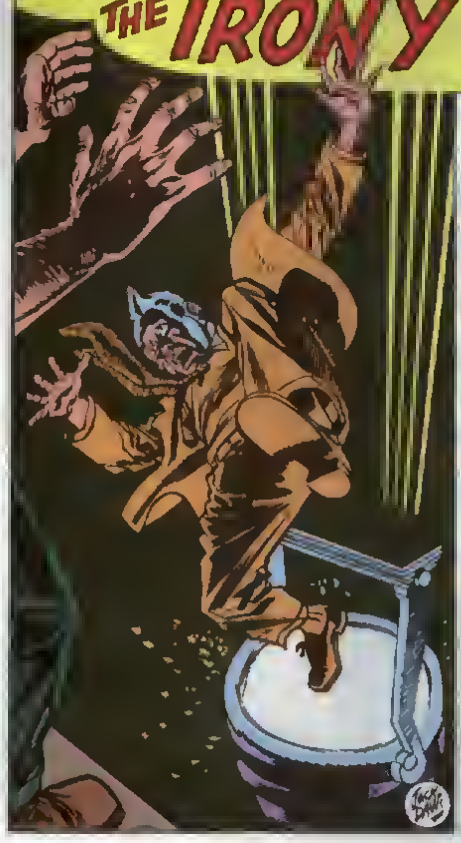

IN THE BOX ON THE TABLE IS A SHRUNKEN HEAD. AS IF IT HAD JUST BEEN UNWRAPPED.
IT...IT'S A SHRUNKEN HEAD! NO! THAT COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT!
ARE YOU SURE, SIR? LOOK AT THE MOUTH! THERE'S BLOOD ALL OVER IT FRESH BLOOD!


HEE, HEE! YES! THERE WAS BLOOD ON THE MOUTH OF THE JIVARO SHRUNKEN HEAD! BEARDSLEY'S BLOOD! HOW COULD A SHRUNKEN HEAD, LONG DEAD, ATTACK AND KILL A MAN, YOU ASK? WELL, WHY NOT TAKE A TRIP UP THE PISTAZA RIVER, IN EASTERN EQUADOR. TO THE JIVARO HEAD-HUNTERS! ASK THEM! I'M SURE THEY'LL HAVE AN EXPLANATION YOU'LL LOSE YOUR HEAD OVER! AND NOW, IF YOU FEEL UP TO IT.. GO ON TO THE CRYPT-KEEPER! HE'S WAITING!

THE CRYPT OF TERROR

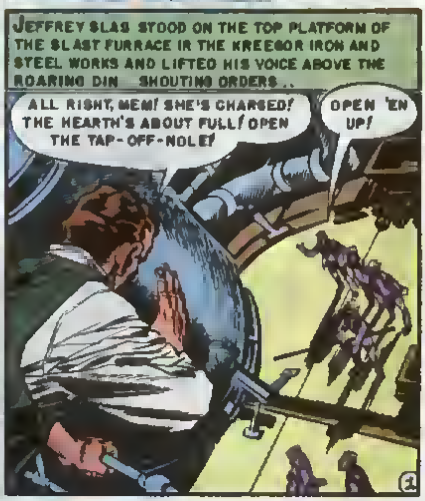
NOW THAT MY FELLOW GHOULURATICS HAVE FINISHED THEIR INANE NARRATIONS, IT'S TIME FOR ME, *THE CRYPT-KEEPER*, TO WIND UP THE OLD WITCH'S MAGAZINE WITH A *GOOD TERROR-TALE!* AH, LET ME SEE! YES! I KNOW ONE, FROM MY VAST COLLECTION HERE IN *THE CRYPT*, THAT I'M *SURE* WILL MAKE THE *BLOOD FREEZE IN YOUR VEINS!* IT'S A *HORROR STORY* THAT WILL *MELT* YOUR *COLD HEARTS!* I CALL IT

THE IRONY OF DEATH!





JEFFREY SLAG STOOD ON THE TOP PLATFORM OF THE SLAG FURNACE IN THE KREEGOR IRON AND STEEL WORKS AND LIFTED HIS VOICE ABOVE THE ROARING DIN SHOUTING ORDERS..

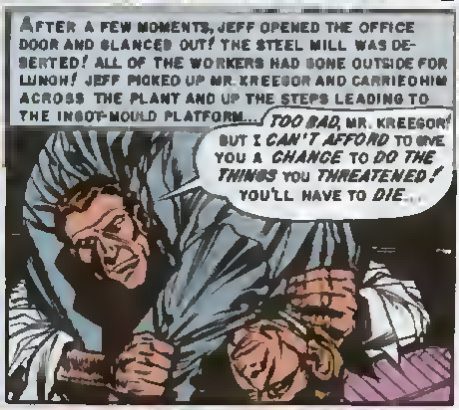



As JEFF SLAG THE PLANT SUPERINTERDENT SIGNALED THE GO-AHEAD, A DOOR AT THE BASE OF THE HUGE BLAST FURNACE WAS OPENED, AND MOLTEN WHITE METAL RAN OUT DOWN THE CLAY-LINED TROUGH
HERE SHE COMES!
THE GUSHING STREAM OF LIQUID IRON RUSHED ON DOWN THE TROUGH AND SPILLED OVER INTO A WAITING LADLE-CAR
OKAY! SHE'S ALMOST FULL! CLOSE UP THE TAP-HOLE
As THE LAST OF THE MOLTEN IRON SLID INTO THE LADLE-CAR, NOW FILLED TO THE BRIM,
TAKE 'ER DOWN TO THE INGOT-MOULDS AND HAVE 'EM POURED, JOE!
OKAY, MR SLAG!
JEFF SLAG WATCHED AS THE LADLE-CAR WITH ITS WHITE-HOT LIQUID CARGO MOVED SLOWLY UP THE TRACKS TOWARD THE CRANE THAT WOULD LIFT IT INTO THE WAITING MOULDS
HEY, SLAG! MR KREEGOR WANTS YOU IN HIS OFFICE... RIGHT AWAY!
OKAY, TIM! TAKE OVER FOR ME, HUH?
JEFF MADE HIS WAY DOWN FROM HIS PERCH HIGH ON THE BLAST FURNACE AND CROSSED THE PLANT TO MR KREEGOR'S SOUND-PROOFED OFFICE...
YOU WANTED TO SEE ME, MR. KREEGOR?
YES, SLAG! COME IN! SIT DOWN!
MR KREEGOR, THE OWNER OF THE KREEGOR IRON AND STEEL WORKS, LIGHTED A CIGAR AND LEANED BACK IN HIS PLUSH ARM CHAIR
ALL RIGHT, SLAG! I'M A BUSINESS MAN! WHAT'S YOUR PRICE?
I DON'T GET YOU, MR KREEGOR!
WHAT'S YOUR PRICE TO KEEP AWAY FROM MY DAUGHTER? I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE AFTER! IT'S HER MONEY YOU'RE INTERESTED IN, NOTHING ELSE! NOW I'M WILLING TO MAKE IT WORTH YOUR WHILE TO LAY OFF
YOU'RE RIGHT, MR KREEGOR. BUT YOU'RE TOO LATE! YOUR DAUGHTER AND I ARE MARRIED ALREADY!
2


WHAT? WHY.. I'LL HAVE IT ANNULLED! I'LL BLACKLIST YOU IN EVERY STEEL PLANT IN THE COUNTRY!
NO, MR. KREEGOR! YOU WON'T DO ANYTHING LIKE THAT.. BECAUSE I'M NOT GOING TO LET YOU!


I WORKED HARD TO MAKE YOUR DAUGHTER SANDRA FALL FOR ME! WHEN YOU DIE ..THIS PLANT GOES TO HER.. AND ME!
NEVER! NEVER! I'LL DISOWN HER! CUT HER OFF WITHOUT A CENT! YOU'RE NO GOOD, SLAG! I KNOW YOUR KIND! I... KEEP AWAY.. KEEP AWAY...


THE SHRIEK OF THE NOON WHISTLE DROWNED OUT OLD MR. KREEGOR'S CRY AS JEFF SLAG STRUCK HIM..
WHEEEEEE


AFTER A FEW MOMENTS, JEFF OPENED THE OFFICE DOOR AND GLANCED OUT! THE STEEL MILL WAS DESERTED! ALL OF THE WORKERS HAD GONE OUTSIDE FOR LUNCH! JEFF PICKED UP MR. KREEGOR AND CARRIED HIM ACROSS THE PLANT AND UP THE STEPS LEADING TO THE INGOT-MOULD PLATFORM...
TOO BAD, MR. KREEGOR! BUT I CAN'T AFFORD TO GIVE YOU A CHANCE TO DO THE THINGS YOU THREATENED! YOU'LL HAVE TO DIE...


WHEN JEFF REACHED THE PLATFORM, HE COVERED THE UNCONSCIOUS FORM OF MR. KREEGOR WITH A TARPAULIN AND WAITED TWENTY THIRTY FORTY-FIVE MINUTES! FINALLY
WHEEEEEE
THERE NOW THEY'LL BE COMING BACK FROM LUNCH!


JEFF GLANCED DOWN AT THE LADLE-CAR BELOW HIM FILLED TO THE RIM WITH MOLTEN WHITE-HOT IRON
JUST AS SOON AS ENOUGH MEN COME IN, I'LL TOSS HIM OVER


SUDDENLY THE STEEL MILL WAS FILLED WITH A BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAM..
MY GOD! LOOK!
SOMEONE.. FALLING!


THE MOLTEM METAL HISSED AND SPUTTERED..
GOOD LORD! HE FELL RIGHT INTO THE LAOLE-CAR!
IT WAS OLD MAN KREEGOR! I SAW HIS FACE!
I..I DON'T FEEL SO.. GOOD!
JEFF, TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE CONCERN OF THE MEN OVER MR KREEGOR'S DEATH, SLIPPED DOWN FROM THE PLATFORM AND
WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT WAS THAT SCREAM?
MR. KREEGOR HE MUST'A BEEN UP ON THE INGOT-MOULD PLATFORM! HE FELL OFF
YEH! MIGHT INTO THE LAOLE-CAR!
OH, NO! NO! AIN'T YOU SURE? I SEEM HIS FACE! IT WAS HIM, ALL RIGHT!
..AND I ..I DIDN'T GET A CHANCE TO TELL HIM ABOUT SANOMA AND ME!
YOU..YOU AND KREEGOR'S DAUGHTER MARRIED, JEFF?
THAT MAKES YOU BOSS!
LOOK, FELLOWS! I BETTER GET ON HOME AND SNEAK THE NEWS TO SANOMA! KEEP EVERYTHING GOIN' WHILE I'M GONE, EH?
WHAT ABOUT THIS LAOLE-CAR, JEFF? SHOULD WE SIDE-TRACK IT?
YOU HEAR ME! I SAID KEEP EVERY-THING GOING! THAT MEANS EVERY-THING!
YOU YOU MEAN POUR 'EM INTO INGOTS..
THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I MEAN! NO USE WASTING GOOD PIG IRON! WHEN THE INGOTS COOL PUT 'EM ASIDE! I'LL WANT 'EM FOR MY OWN USE!
YEAH, JEFF!
WE GOTCHA JEFF!


HEH, HEH! YES, THAT'S HOW JEFFREY SLAG BECAME PRESIDENT OF THE KREEGOR IRON AND STEEL WORKS! HE JUST TOSSED POOR OLD UNCONSCIOUS MR. KREEGOR INTO THE LADLE OF MOLTEN IRON. SCREAMED TO ATTRACT ATTENTION AND HE WAS *INSTANTLY PROMOTED!* THEY CALLED IT AN UNFORTUNATE ACCIDENT! THE INGOTS OF METAL THAT CONTAINED MR. KREEGOR'S REMAINS WERE STORED AWAY..
.. BUT NOT FOR LONG! JEFF HAD ONE OF THEM PROCESSED INTO A RUGGED SAFE... TO HOLD HIS 'INHERITED FORTUNE'..
HEH, HEH! A *FITTING MONUMENT* TO YOUR *MEMORY*.. MR. KREEGOR!
HE HAD ANOTHER OF THE INGOTS CONTAINING MR. KREEGOR'S REMAINS PROCESSED INTO WROUGHT IRON GARDEN FURNITURE...
AH! THIS IS THE LIFE! THANKS TO *YOU*, MR. KREEGOR!
A THIRD INGOT WAS FASHIONED INTO COUNTLESS ASHTRAYS, WHICH JEFF PLACED ABOUT HIS LUXURIOUS MANSION... GRINDING CIGARETTES OUT IN THEM..
DEGRADING, ISN'T IT, KREEGOR? THE TABLES ARE TURNED NOW, AREN'T THEY?
AND POOR SANDRA... POOR, DISILLUSIONED SANDRA. BECAME MORE AND MORE UNHAPPY AS THE MONTHS PASSED
JEFF! WHAT'S HAPPENED TO US, JEFF? YOU ACT AS THOUGH YOU *DON'T LOVE ME ANYMORE!*
HOW DID YOU *GUESS?* I'VE *GOT* WHAT I WANT NOW, SANDRA... THE MILL... THE MONEY! THAT'S THE *ONLY REASON* I *MARRIED* YOU!
OH, JEFF SO... JEFF! AND I.. BELIEVED YOU .LOVED ME!
OH, STOP YOUR WHIMPERING! IF YOU DON'T *LIKE* IT... *DIVORCE* ME! BUT MY *PRICE* WILL BE *HIGH*.. *VERY HIGH!* I'LL WANT THE *MILL*... THE *WHOLE WORKS*..!
SO SANDRA LEFT JEFF..
GOOD-BYE, JEFF! I'M *LEAVING* YOU.. LEAVING YOU WITH *EVERYTHING!* I'LL GET ALONG..
YEAH! GUNE! SO LONG! GOOD RIDDANCE!
5


THERE WERE OTHER THINGS JEFF DID WITH THE INGOTS OF IRON FROM THE LADLE THAT MR. KREEGOR HAD FALLEN INTO! JEFF HAD GARDEN TOOLS FASHIONED...
SCROUNGE, MR. KREEGOR! SCROUNGE IN THE FILTH AND MUD LIKE I HAD TO DO...FOR YEARS...
...OTHER DEGRADING FORMS...
THAT'S WHAT I THINK OF YOU...MR. KREEGOR.
...AND THEN ONE DAY...
WELL, FIND THEM! THERE WERE TWO INGOTS LEFT...
YES, MR. SLAG!
THE LAST OF THE INGOTS CONTAINING MR. KREEGOR'S REMAINS HAD DISAPPEARED FROM THE STORE ROOM! JEFF WAS FURIOUS...
I SUSPECT, SIR, THAT THEY WERE SHIPPED OUT TO DETROIT ALONG WITH ANOTHER ORDER!
WELL, GET THEM BACK! I WANT THEM BACK!
AT A BOARD MEETING SEVERAL WEEKS LATER...
...AND THAT'S THE PLAN, MR. SLAG! AN EXHIBIT OF THE HISTORY OF THE USES OF IRON THROUGH THE CENTURIES! IT WILL BE VERY IMPRESSIVE!
SOUNDS ALL RIGHT! OKAY! GO AHEAD! IT'S A GOOD ADVERTISING STUNT!
MEANWHILE, THE SHIPMENTS OF IRON INGOTS WERE BEING CHECKED...
I'M SURE OF IT! THE DETROIT ORDER HAS BEEN CHECKED CAREFULLY!
OH, DEAR! MR. SLAG WILL BE VERY ANGRY. VERY...
WEEKS PASSED! ONE DAY...
HOW DO YOU LIKE THE EXHIBIT SO FAR, MR. SLAG?
VERY NICE! WHAT'S THIS?


OH, THESE ARE EXAMPLES OF SOME OF THE MORE INFAMOUS USES OF IRON THROUGH THE AGES! WE CONSTRUCTED EXACT REPLICAS OF MANY OF THE TORTURE DEVICES USED IN THE MIDDLE AGES EMPLOYING IRON...
HMMM! VERY INTERESTING! WHAT'S THIS ONE CALLED?
THIS IS A COPY OF THE NOTORIOUS IRON-MAIDEN DEVICE...
I SEE! THEY'D PUT A PERSON INSIDE... LIKE SO?
PLEASE, SIR! BE CAREFUL! THOSE SPIKES ARE RAZOR SHARP!
FITS PERFECTLY!
SUDDENLY THE SPIKED DOOR OF THE IRON-MAIDEN CLOSED SLIGHTLY... PINNING JEFF SLAG INSIDE..
STOP IT! STOP IT! IT'S CLOSING...
PLEASE, MR. SLAG! I DON'T SEE ANY HUMOR IN YOUR ANTICS..
SLOWLY STEADILY.. THE SPIKED DOOR CLOSED ON THE FRENZIED SCREAMING STEEL-WORKS OWNER...
I'M...NOT...JOKING! THE SPIKES...THEY'RE...
QUICKLY! OPEN IT!
I CAN'T! IT'S STUCK!
AAAAAAAAAAAAAH!
UNABLE TO OPEN THE SPIKED DOOR, THE BOARD MEMBERS WATCHED HORRIFIED AS THE IRON-MAIDEN CLOSED.. WATCHED THE BLOOD TRICKLE OUT OF THE BOTTOM AND FORM A POOL ON THE FLOOR.. LISTENED AS JEFF'S SHRIEKING FINALLY DIED AWAY..
HOW HORRIBLE!
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT! IT JUST SEEMED TO CLOSE... BY ITS OWN ACCORD!
MEANWHILE... IN THE SHIPPING ROOM...
WAIT A MINUTE! HERE'S SOMETHING! YES! THIS IS IT! THE TWO MISSING INGOTS WERE USED IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN IRON-MAIDEN... FOR THE EXHIBIT..
HEH, HEH! AND THAT'S MY STORY, DEAR FRIENDS! I HOPE YOU GOT THE POINT! JEFF DID! OF COURSE... IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN AN ACCIDENT. THE IRON-MAIDEN CLOSING...BUT THEN AGAIN...HAVING BEEN MADE OF THE INGOTS CONTAINING POOR MR. KREEGOR'S REMAINS... IT MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN! EH? DON'T FORGET TO READ THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE FOR INFORMATION ON GETTING BACK ISSUES! BYE NOW! WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IR MY MAG... TALES FROM THE CRYPT!



YOU SAY IT'S A 45-MINUTE BUS TRIP WITH A TRANSFER TO THE COMIC BOOK SHOP? YOU SAY IT'S A HARROWING 30-MINUTE DRIVE ON THE EXPRESSWAY TO THE MALL, AND THEN A 30-MINUTE MERRY-GO-ROUND RIDE TO FIND A PARKING PLACE? YOU SAY YOUR TOWN DOESN'T EVEN **HAVE** A COMIC BOOK SHOP OR BOOKSTORE? IS THAT WHAT'S TROUBLING YOU, BUNKY? WELL, THEN, YOU SHOULD .

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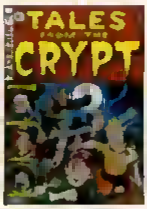
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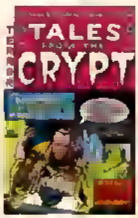


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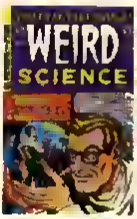
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Haunt of Fear (USPS 009308) Vol. 1, No. 9, November 1994 published quarterly in November, February, May and August by Gemstone Publishing, 202 Ald, West Plains, MO 65775-3532. **Second-class postage paid at West Plains, MO.** Entire contents © 1994 by William M. Gaines, Agent, Inc. Haunt of Fear #8 © 1951 by Fables Publishing Co., Inc. re © 1985 by William M. Gaines, Agent, Inc. All rights reserved. Nothing herein contained may be reproduced without the written permission of William M. Gaines, New York, New York. Annual subscription rate $8 ($12 outside US, payable in US funds). Printed in U.S.A. **Postmaster: send address changes to Haunt of Fear, Russ Cochran, PO Box 469, West Plains, MO 65775-0469.**

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! GREETINGS, *FEAR FANS!* IT'S SO *NICE* TO SEE YOUR *FRIGHTENED FACES* AGAIN! WHAT ARE YOU SO *PALE* ABOUT? I HAVEN'T EVEN *BEGUN* YET! COME IN! IT'S *ME*...*THE OLD WITCH, MISTRESS OF THE HAUNT OF FEAR!* ARE YOU HUNGRY FOR ANOTHER OF MY *TASTY TERROR-TALES* THAT I *COOK UP* IN MY *CAULDRON?* *GOOD!* THEN I'LL NOT KEEP YOU *DROOLING!* I CALL THIS *HORROR-NELPING*

WARTS SO HORRIBLE?

G. Ingels

MY STORY NAS ITS BEGINNING IN A SMALL TOWN THAT LIES PEACEFULLY NEAR THE BARRS OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER! IR HIS BEDROOM, OLD MISERLY TITUS CRANBERRY RAISES HIS HEAD AS TWO SEEDY LOOKING, POORLY DRESSED YOURG MEN ENTER

AFTERNOON, UNCLE TITUS!

HOW'RE YOU FEELIR TODAY, UNCLE TITUS?

HMMMPHF SO IT'S *YOU TWO!* CAN'T *WAIT* FOR ME TO *DIE*, EH? GOT TO COME AROUND ARD *HELP*...


OLD TITUS GLARES AT HIS TWO NEPHEWS ..
ALL YOU TWO ARE INTERESTED IN IS MY MONEY!
THAT'S NOT TRUE, UNCLE TITUS!
WE'RE WORRIED ABOUT YOU!
WORRIED YOU MIGHT NOT GET ANY OF IT, EH? WELL, YOU CAN STOP WORRYIN', 'CAUSE YOU'RE NOT!
WHA..?
BUT..
NOW GET OUT! GET OUT AND LET ME DIE IN PEACE!
C'MON, LEM!
YEAH, HANK!
AS HANK AND LEN CRANBERRY, OLD TITUS' NEPHEWS AND ONLY HEIRS, LEAVE THE SICK MISER'S BEDROOM, WE SHOOT ACROSS TOWN TO A BACKYARD WHERE TWO BOYS ARE TALKING
DON'T SCRATCH 'EM, RUDY! THEY'LL ONLY GET WORSE!
I CAN'T HELP IT, CHUCK! THESE WARTS ITCH! I WISH THERE WAS SOME WAY OF GETTIN' RID OF 'EM!
CHUCK... THE FORTUNATE YOUNGSTER WITHOUT THE TROUBLESOME SKIN IRRITATIONS. WHISPERS WIDE-EYED TO RUDY
I'LL BET THE HERMIT KNOWS HOW TO CURE WARTS!
THE HERMIT! GEE! I'D BE SCARED TO ASK HIM!
WHY? HE AIN'T SO BAD! I'LL BET ALL THOSE THINGS WE HEAR ABOUT HIM ARE JUST A PACK OF LIES!
YOU THINK SO, CHUCK? GEE! THESE WARTS ITCH! DO YOU.. REALLY THINK THE HERMIT MIGHT KNOW A WAY...
C'MON, RUDY! WE'LL GO SEE HIM! WHADAYA GOT TO LOSE, HUH?
YEAH! WHAT'VE I GOT TO LOSE...


MEANWHILE, BACK IN HIS BEDROOM, OLD TITUS CRANBERRY GREETS A NEW ARRIVAL ..HIS LIFE-LONG LEGAL ADVISOR .
COME CLOSER, SIDNEY! I CAN'T TALK TOO LOUD! I...I'M DYIN-SIO! I AIN'T GOT MUCH LONGER...
NONSENSE, TITUS! YOU'VE GOT PLENTY OF YEARS AHEAD OF YOU! WHY, IN A COUPLE OF WEEKS...
IN A COUPLE OF WEEKS, I'LL BE DEAD! AND THOSE TWO NO-GOOD NEPHEWS OF MINE WILL INHERIT MY MONEY. MY LIFE'S SAVINGS! ALMOST FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS!
WELL, TITUS! THEY'RE YOUR LEGAL HEIRS!
THEY'RE NOT GOING TO GET IT, UNDERSTAND? NOT ONE RED CENT! I'LL HAVE MY MONEY BURIED WITH ME...
YOU CAN'T DO THAT, TITUS! THAT'D BE AGAINST THE LAW
THEN I'LL BUY SOMETHIN' WITH THE MONEY! A RING! THEY CAN'T STOP ME FROM BEIN' BURIED WITH MY RING. CKN THEY?
NO! I GUESS NOT.
TITUS PAINFULLY TURNS OVER AND DRAWS A TIN BOX FROM BENEATH HIS PILLOW...
HERE, SIDNEY! HERE'S ALL MY MONEY! BUY A DIAMOND RING FOR ME! SPEND EVERY DOLLAR ON IT!
THIS IS FOOLISHNESS, TITUS...
SOMEDNE WILL ROB YOUR GRAVE AND STEAL THE RING...
LET 'EM TRY! JUST LET 'EM TRY!
OUTSIDE OLD TITUS' BEDROOM, HANK AND CLEM ARE EAVESDROPPING...
DID YOU HEAR THAT, CLEM? THE DIRTY OLD SKINFLINT!
DON'T WORRY, HANK! SIDNEY JUST TIPPED US HOW TO GET WHAT'S RIGHTFULLY OURS!
3


MEANWHILE, FAR ACROSS THE QUIET TOWN, RUDY AND CHUCK ARE APPROACHING THE RAMSHACKLE HOME OF THE RECLUSE THAT THE TOWNSFOLK CALL "THE HERMIT"
I... I'M SCARED, CHUCK!
C'MON! REMEMBER YOUR WARTS!
IN ANSWER TO THEIR TIMID KNOCKS, THE TATTERED OLD DOOR CREAKS OPEN BEFORE THE BOYS AND A HAIRY HEAD PEERS OUT...
EH? WHAT DO YOU BOYS WANT?
P...P-PLEASE, MISTER HERM... I MEAN... SIR! MY FRIEND HERE HAS GOT WARTS... SOMETHIN' AWFUL!
WE...WE WAS WONDERIN'...
BEHIND THE UNKEMPT HAIR AND DIRTY BEARD, THE RECLUSE'S FACE LIGHTS UP
WARTS, EH? AND YOU WANT ME TO TELL YOU HOW TO GET RID OF 'EM, EH?
Y...Y...YES, SIR!
IF... YOU CAN, SIR!
THE HAIRY FIGURE STEPS BACK, MOTIONING THE BOYS TO ENTER THE DARK INTERIOR OF HIS SHABBY HUT! THEN HE CLOSES THE DOOR AND SITS DOWN! THE YOUNGSTERS EYE HIM UNCOMFORTABLY
FIRST, YOU'VE GOT TO GET AN OLD EMPTY VINEGAR BOTTLE! THEN YOU MUST FILL IT WITH GRAVEYARD STUMP-WATER...
THEN YOU MUST TAKE THE BOTTLE FULL OF STUMP-WATER AND STAND OVER A FRESH GRAVE..
.. HOLD THE HAND WITH THE WARTS OVER THE GRAVE-STONE AND POUR THE STUMP-WATER ON THE HAND SO THAT THE WATER RUNS DOWN THE HEAD-STONE INTO THE SOFT GRAVE SOIL!
ALL THIS MUST BE DONE AT MIDNIGHT UNDER A FULL MOON! AND IF YOU SEE OR HEAR ANYTHING STRANGE... DON'T BE A-FEARED! MANY WEIRD THINGS 'PEAR TO HAPPEN WHILE CASTIN' THE WITCHERY OF WART-REMOVIN'!
4


BACK ACSOSS TOWS, TITUS RAISES SIS HEAD WEAKLY AS SIDNEY DAVIDSON ENTESS THE BEDROOM...
OH...GASP...SIDNEY! THANK GOODNESS...GASP YOU SOT BACK IS TIME
I'VE GOT THE RING, TITUS! PERSONALLY
REVER MIND! SEVES MISD! SIVE IT TO ME...SASP QUICKLY!
HERE YOU ASE!
SEAUTIFUL! SEE GASP HOW IT SPARKLES! NOW GASP.. SEMEMSES, SIDSEY! I AM GASP TO BE BURIED WITH THIS RING! ON THE TABLE...IS A WRITTEN REQUEST SASP TO THAT EFFECT
YES, TITUS! I UNDERSTARD!
MEANWHILE CHUCK AND RUDY LEAVE THE RECLUSE'S SHACK...
GEE, CHUCK! THE GRAVEYARD AT MIDNIGHT, WITH A FULL MOON!
DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE AFRAID? OKAY...THEY'RE YOUR WARTS...
THAT NIGHT, AN ALMOST FULL MOON SHINES THROUGH THE BEDROOM WINDOW OF OLD TITUS CRANBERRY AS...
UNCLE TITUS! UNCLE TITUS!
DON'T BOTHER, BOYS! HE CAN'T HEAR YOU! HE'S DEAD!
THE REXT DAY OLD TITUS CRANSERRY IS SUSIED IN THE TOWS CEMETERY! OSLY THSEE MES COME TO PAY THEIR LAST SESPECTS...GLEN ASD HANK, HIS TWO SEPHEWS ARD SIDNEY, HIS LIFE-LORG LEGAL ADVISDR...
AND AS THE COFFIN IS BEING LOWERED INTO THE YAWNING GRAVE... FAR ACROSS TOWN, TWO BOYS MAKE PLANS
THESE'LL SE A FULL MOON TORISHT! LOOK! SEE? THE PAPER SAYS SO!
THEN I'LL MEE T YOU AT ELEVEN-THIRTY BY THE CEMETERY ASD DON'T FORGET AN EMPTY VINEGAR BOTTLE!
5


THAT NIGHT, AT ELEVEN FORTY-FIVE, TWO SMALL SHADOWY FIGURES PUSH OPEN THE RUSTY SQUEAKING GATE OF THE CEMETERY! ONE OF THEM CARRIES AN EMPTY BOTTLE
L L LISTEN CH-CHUCK! MY WARTS HAVEN'T BEEN I-ITCHIN' ME L-L-LATELY!
C'MON! IT'S TOO LATE TO TURN BACK NOW!
SILENTLY THE TWO BOYS MOVE ACROSS THE SOFT SOD BETWEEN THE TOMBSTONES
L-L-LOOK! THERE'S A STUMP!
AN' IT'S B-GOT WATER IN IT TOO!
ONE OF THE BOYS BENDS AND FILLS THE EMPTY VINEGAR BOTTLE WITH THE FOUL-SMELLING, STAGNANT STUMP-WATER
PHEE-YOO!
SH-H-H-H!
N-NOW WE GOT TO FIND A F-FRESH GRAVE!
THEY B-BURIED OLD MISTER CRANBERRY TODAY! L-LET'S LOOK FOR H-H-HIS GRAVE!
SOON, THE BOYS REACH THE BARE MOUND, VOID OF GRASS, THAT SIGNIFIES A FRESH GRAVE
IS TH-THIS IT?
W-W-WAIT! I'LL STRIKE A MATCH AN' MAKE SH-SH-SURE!
THE GLOW OF THE MATCH LIGHTS UP THE NEWLY-CUT HEADSTONE
TITUS CRANBERRY! TH-THIS IS IT!
LISTEN
DRIFTING ACROSS THE STILL NIGHT AIR COMES THE SOUND OF CHIMES THE TOWN CLOCK TOLLING THE ROUN OF
MIDNIGHT!
GO AHEAD! HOLD YOUR HAND OVER THE GRAVE-STONE AND POUR


THE STENCH OF THE STAGNANT STUMP-WATER BURNS THE BOY'S NOSTRILS AS RUDY POURS IT OUT ONTO HIS WART-AFFLICTED HAND! AS THE LAST DROPS RUN OFF ONTO THE GRAVESTONE AND DOWN INTO THE SOFT EARTH..
THERE! IT'S DONE!
THE TERRIFIED YOUNGSTERS STARE IN HORROR AS THE DANCING FLICKERING GLOW OF LIGHT BOBS THE GRAVESTONES
C-CRIPES! LOOK!
IT'S C-C-COMING TOWARD US!
L-LET'S HIDE!
PARALYZED WITH FEAR, CHUCK AND RUDY CROUCH BEHIND A GRAVESTONE AS THE LIGHT NEARS! SOON THEY SEE IT IS JUST A LANTERN..
HEY! IT'S A COUPLE OF MEN! ONE'S GOT A SHOVEL!
SH-H-H-H! MAYBE THEY'RE GHOSTS!
WHILE ONE MAN SETS THE LANTERN DOWN NEXT TO TITUS CRANBERRY'S GRAVE, THE OTHER BEGINS TO DIG..
SEE! THEY'RE DIGGIN' UP OLD CRANBERRY..
I, I'M SCARED!
AFTER WHAT SEEMS LIKE HOURS SCARCELY MOVING FOR FEAR OF BEING SEEN, THE FRIGHTENED BOYS HEAR A HOLLOW BOOM
THEY.. THEY'VE STRUCK THE COFFIN..
GOLLY!
THEN A PAINFUL, CREAKING SOUND..
THEY'RE PRYING IT OPEN..
MAYBE..IF WE RUN NOW..
SUDDENLY, A SHRILL SCREAM SHATTERS THE SILENT BLACKNESS AROUND THEM
AAAAAAAAAAAA!
7


THEN ANOTHER...
EEEEEEEEE!
SOMETHIN'S GOT THOSE TWO GUYS...
COME ON! LET'S GO!
SUDDENLY A FACE APPEARS OVER THE EDGE OF THE GRAVE, ITS CHALK-WHITE SKIN LIT BY THE LANTERN.
L-L-LOOK!
T-TITUS GRANBERRY!
A WAXEN HAND REACHES OUT OF THE BLACK PIT AND BEGINS SCOOPING THE SOIL BACK INTO THE GRAVE, WHILE THE MUFFLED SCREAMS OF THE TWO MEN GROW WEAKER AND WEAKER...
..UNTIL SILENCE ONCE AGAIN FALLS OVER THE CEMETERY...
TH-THE GRAVE'S ALL COVERED OVER AGAIN..
C'MON! LET'S GET OUTTA HERE!
THE BOYS SCRAMBLE FROM THEIR HIDING PLACE AND DART ACROSS THE MOUNDS BETWEEN HEAD-STONES..TOWARD THE RUSTY GATE..
BOY! THE HERMIT WAS RIGHT! WE CERTAINLY DID SEE SOME STRANGE THINGS!
YEAH.. HEY!
SEE.. WHAT WE SAW TONIGHT DIDN'T REALLY HAPPEN, DID IT? IT WAS ALL PART OF THE WITCHERY, WASN'T IT?
WITCHERY, NOTHIN'! LOOK! AFTER ALL THE TROUBLE WE WENT TO, I STILL GOT MY WARTS!
HEE,HEE! WELL,THAT'S IT, KIDDIES! OF COURSE THE TWO MEN WHO TRIED TO DIG UP OLD TITUS' GRAVE WERE HANK AND CLEM! NOW, THEY'RE IN IT! IT WOULDN'T HAVE DONE 'EM MUCH GOOD IF THEY HAD MANAGED TO STEAL THE RING,THOUGH! IT'S JUST PASTE! YOU KNOW HOW TRUSTWORTHY LEGAL ADVISORS ARE! WELL, THE VAULT-KEEPER'S WAITING TO TELL YOU HIS TERROR-TALE, SO I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO HIM! OH,BY THE WAY! IF YOU HAVEN'T AS YET ORDERED ALL YOUR BACK ISSUES READ MY COLUMN, THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE, FOR ALL THE INFORMATION!

THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEH, HEH! GREETINGS, *GHOULS!* NOW THAT *THE OLD WITCH* IS FINISHED DISHING OUT *HER* SLIME, I'VE GOT A *REALLY* SLIMY HORROR STORY FOR YOU! YES, IT'S ME, *THE VAULT-KEEPER!* COME INTO THE *VAULT OF HORROR!* THIS TIME I'VE CHOSEN ONE OF MY BEST *SPINE-TINGLERS* FROM MY COLLECTION! READY? THEN I'LL BEGIN THE *CHILLING TALE* OF THE *MACABRE* I CALL

Forbidden Fruit

THE ISLAND LOOMED UP ON THE DAWN HORIZON LIKE A GHOSTLY SEA MONSTER FLOATING ON THE WIDE EXPANSE OF ENDLESS OCEAN! THE TINY LIFE-RAFT BOBBED ABOUT ON THE TOSSING WAVES. ITS TWO HUDDLED OCCUPANTS SCARCELY MOVING! THEN THE GIRL LIFTED HER BLONDE HEAD AND GAZED ABOUT.

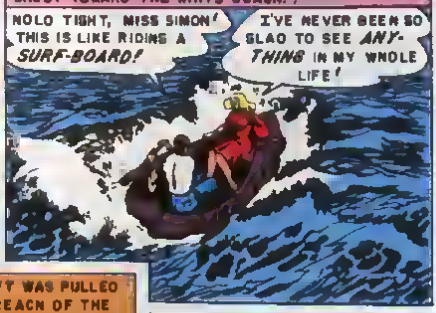
WHY! IT'S ..MORNING! I...I... MR. BAKER! MR. BAKER... *LOOK!* AN *ISLAND!*

WHA ? HUH? WHERE? OH...YES! I SEE IT! THANK HEAVENS!

THE MALE OCCUPANT OF THE TINY RUBBER RAFT BEGAN TO PADDLE FURIOUSLY TOWARD THE DISTANT ISLAND WHILE THE GIRL BEGAN TO SOB FOR JOY



SOON THE TINY CRAFT NEARED ITS GOAL, WAS CAUGHT UP BY THE ROARING BREAKERS THAT ROLLED SHOREWARD, AND WENT SPEEDING ON A WAVE-CREST TOWARD THE WHITE BEACH..



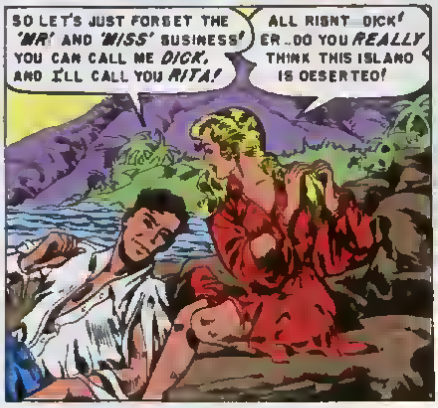
SOON THE RAFT SCRAPED THE SAND AND THE TWO CASTAWAYS SCRAMBLED ASHORE

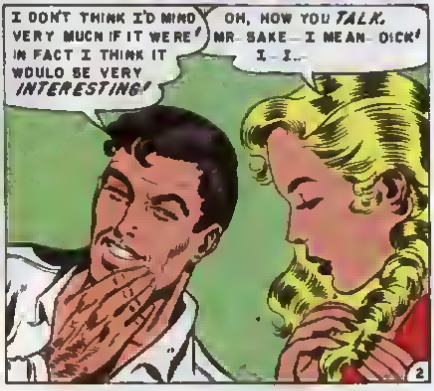


AFTER THE RAFT WAS PULLED UP OUT OF THE REACH OF THE INCOMING BREAKERS, THE CAST-AWAYS LOOKED ABOUT THEM.





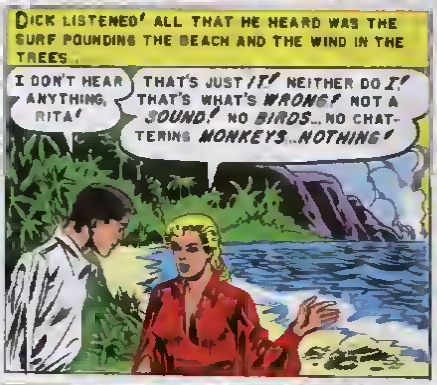


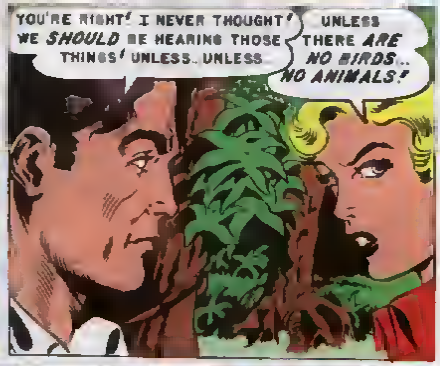



SUDDENLY, DICK CAUGHT RITA IN HIS STRONG ARMS
I MEAN IT, RITA! I'M ALMOST GLAD THE PLANE WENT DOWN!
DICK! PLEASE! I.. I...
RITA DARLING!
OH, MY DEAREST!
THEY CLUNG TO EACH OTHER THERE ON THE SUN-BAKED BEACH...
DICK! I'VE LOVED YOU FOR SO LONG!
AND YOU DIDN'T LET ME KNOW? YOU LITTLE IDIOT! DID IT HAVE TO TAKE A PLANE CRASH AND A NIGHT ON A RAFT?
DICK LOOKED ABOUT AT THE FOLIAGE BORDERING THE BEACH..
WHAT IS IT, DICK? YOU LOOK PUZZLED!
I AM! I I DON'T SEE ANY FRUIT-BEARING TREES OR BUSHES!
THE CASTAWAYS HURRIED UP TO THE BEACH, EXAMINING THE OVERGROWTH THAT LINED THE WHITE STRETCH OF SAND
YOU'RE RIGHT, DICK! NOT A SIGN OF FRUIT! USUALLY TROPICAL ISLANDS HAVE AN ABUNDANCE
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! BUT DON'T WORRY! THERE MUST BE SOMETHING TO EAT! MAYBE IN THE INTERIOR! ANIMALS
LUCKY I REMEMBERED THE GUN WHEN WE ABANDONED THE PLANE! WE HAVEN'T MUCH AMMUNITION, BUT..
DICK! LOOK!
DICK FOLLOWED RITA'S STARE! BEFORE THEM, ON THE BEACH, WAS A CIRCLE OF CHARRED STONES AND ASHES.
THE REMAINS OF A FIRE!
THEN SOMEONE IS OR THIS ISLAND!
3


THE TWO CASTAWAYS SMILED AT EACH OTHER SHEEPISHLY...
WELL! AT LEAST THAT MEANS THERE'S FOOD AROUND NOT TO MENTION THE COMPANY!
HURRY! LET'S FIND HIM! I'M STARVED!


DICK AND RITA CIRCLED THE WHOLE ISLAND, BUT THEY FOUND NO ONE! WHEN THEY'D RETURNED TO THEIR STARTING POINT
THAT'S STRANGE! LOOKS LIKE WE'LL HAVE TO TAKE TO THE JUNGLE!
LISTEN, DICK! LISTEN!


DICK LISTENED! ALL THAT HE HEARD WAS THE SURF POUNDING THE BEACH AND THE WIND IN THE TREES...
I DON'T HEAR ANYTHING, RITA!
THAT'S JUST IT! NEITHER DO I! THAT'S WHAT'S WRONG! NOT A SOUND! NO BIRDS... NO CHATTERING MONKEYS... NOTHING!


YOU'RE RIGHT! I NEVER THOUGHT! WE SHOULD BE HEARING THOSE THINGS! UNLESS... UNLESS...
UNLESS THERE ARE NO BIRDS.. NO ANIMALS!


SUDDENLY, RITA GASPED! SHE POINTED DOWN AT THE RAFT...
LOOK, DICK! FOOTPRINTS!
MAYBE THEY'RE OURS!

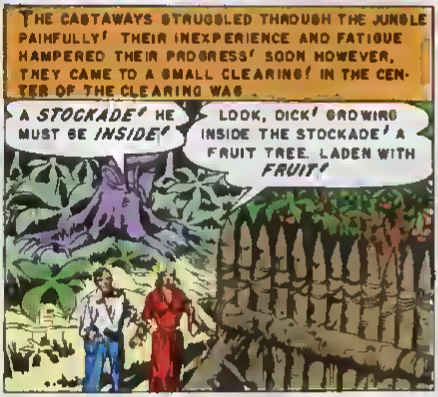

NO! SEE? THEY COME STRAIGHT OUT OF THE JUNGLE... CIRCLE THE RAFT... THEN GO BACK!
OUR FRIEND.. THE ONE WHO BUILT THE FIRE!

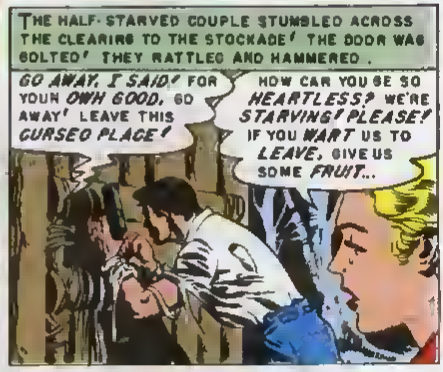

SUDDENLY, A HOARSE, FEARI-FYING VOICE STARTLED THE CASTAWAYS! IT CAME FROM THE THICK JUNGLE...
YOU TWO! GET IN YOUR RAFT... AND GET AWAY FROM THIS ISLAND... NOW..
WHO- WHO ARE YOU?


NEVER MIND! JUST GO! LEAVE THIS HORRIBLE PLACE! GO HOW!
COME OUT WHOEVER YOU ARE! COME OUT WHERE WE CAN SEE YOU! OR ELSE

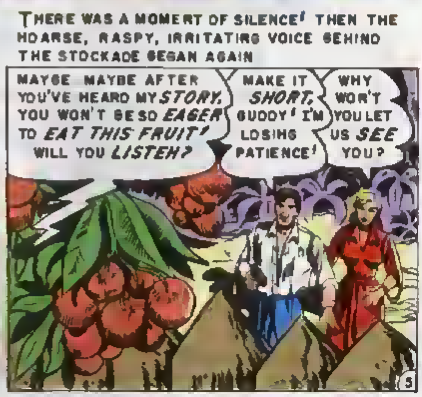

SUDDENLY, RITA CAUGHT A GLIMPSE OF FLASHING GREY AS SOMETHING SCURRIED AWAY INTO THE JUNGLE
LOOK, DICK! THERE HE GOES!
C'MON! THAT DEVIL MUST HAVE SOME FOOD!


DICK AND RITA PLUNGED INTO THE JUNGLE AFTER THE FLEEING ISLANDER...
WAIT! DON'T RUN AWAY! WE'RE STARVING!
PLEASE! HAVE PITY!


THE CASTAWAYS STRUGGLED THROUGH THE JUNGLE PAINFULLY! THEIR INEXPERIENCE AND FATIGUE HAMPERED THEIR PROGRESS! SOON HOWEVER, THEY CAME TO A SMALL CLEARING! IN THE CENTER OF THE CLEARING WAS .
A STOCKADE! HE MUST BE INSIDE!
LOOK, DICK! GROWING INSIDE THE STOCKADE! A FRUIT TREE. LADEN WITH FRUIT!

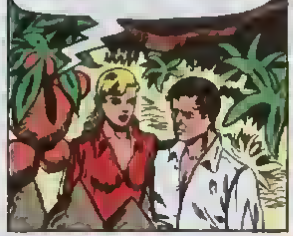

THE HALF-STARVED COUPLE STUMBLED ACROSS THE CLEARING TO THE STOCKADE! THE DOOR WAS BOLTED! THEY RATTLED AND HAMMERED .
GO AWAY, I SAID! FOR YOUR OWN GOOD, GO AWAY! LEAVE THIS CURSED PLACE!
HOW CAN YOU BE SO HEARTLESS? WE'RE STARVING! PLEASE! IF YOU WANT US TO LEAVE, GIVE US SOME FRUIT...


HO! HO FRUIT! IT'D BE BETTER TO STARVE TO DEATH THAN EAT ONE BITE!
LISTEN, WHOEVER YOU ARE! I'VE GOT A GUN! IF YOU DON'T LET US HAVE SOMETHING TO EAT..SO HELP ME, I'LL KILL YOU!


THERE WAS A MOMENT OF SILENCE! THEN THE HOARSE, RASPY, IRRITATING VOICE BEHIND THE STOCKADE BEGAN AGAIN
MAYBE MAYBE AFTER YOU'VE HEARD MY STORY, YOU WON'T BE SO EAGER TO EAT THIS FRUIT! WILL YOU LISTEN?
MAKE IT SHORT, BUDDY! I'M LOSING PATIENCE!
WHY WON'T YOU LET US SEE YOU?

THE HUSKY COUSHINS VOICE CONTINUED...

...AFTER YOU HEAR MY STORY, YOU WILL *KNOW* WHY! SIX MONTHS AGO, MY SHIP...AN OIL TANKER *EXPLODED* EAST OF THIS GOD-FORSAKEN PLACE! I WAS THE ONLY SURVIVOR! YOU SEE.



'...I WAS IN THE CROWS-NEST WHEN THE BLAST OCCURRED! I WAS THROWN CLEAR OF THE FLAMES AND BURNING OIL...'



'SOMEHOW OR OTHER I MANAGED TO STAY AFLOAT, AND I WAS FINALLY WASHED ASHORE ON THIS TERRIBLE PLACE...'



'I SOON DISCOVERED, AS *YOU* DID, THAT THERE WERE NO ANIMALS OR BIRDS ON THIS ISLAND! AT FIRST I COULD FIND NO FRUIT OR VEGETABLES EITHER! BUT, FINALLY, I STUMBLED ACROSS THIS STOCKADE AND ITS ENCLOSED FRUIT TREE...'



'I ATE MY FILL OF THE SWEET-TASTING FRUIT! I WONDERED WHO HAD BUILT THE STOCKADE AND WHY! THEN, ONE DAY I FOUND OUT! FUNNY LITTLE SORES, LIKE *MOLDY GROWTHS*, BEGAN TO APPEAR ON MY HANDS AND FACE...'



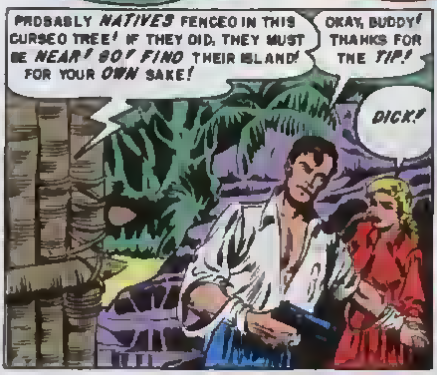
IN A *WEEK*, IT HAD GROWN *WORSE*... YET, I COULD *NOT STOP EATING* THE TASTY FRUIT! SOON THE *UGLY SLIME* COVERED MY *WHOLE BODY*! MY *SKIN* BEGAN TO *ROT*! TODAY...SIX MONTHS LATER...WELL...NOW YOU KNOW *WHY* I WON'T LET YOU *SEE* ME!



PROBABLY *NATIVES* FENCED IN THIS CURSED TREE! IF THEY DID, THEY MUST BE *NEAR*! SO! *FIND* THEIR ISLAND! FOR YOUR *OWN* SAKE!

OKAY, BUDDY! THANKS FOR THE *TIP*!

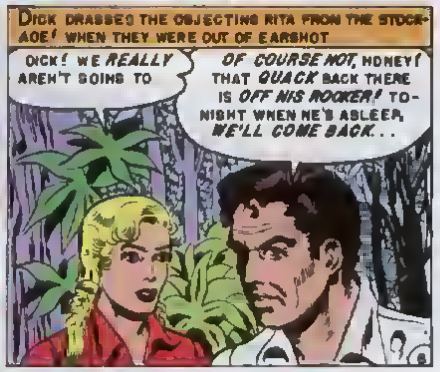
DICK!



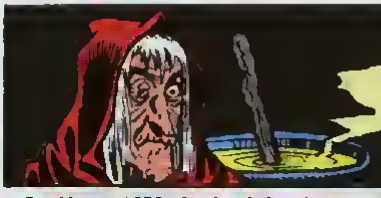
DICK DRAGGED THE OBJECTING RITA FROM THE STOCKADE! WHEN THEY WERE OUT OF EARSHOT

DICK! WE *REALLY* AREN'T GOING TO

OF COURSE NOT, HONEY! THAT *QUACK* BACK THERE IS *OFF HIS ROCKER*! TONIGHT WHEN HE'S ASLEEP, *WE'LL COME BACK*...




THAT RIGHT, WITH THE SIGNAL LAMP FROM THE RAFT, THE TWO STARVING CASTAWAYS RETURNED TO THE STOCKADE! SILENTLY, DICK CLIMBED THE HIGH SPIKED FENCE.. LET HIMSELF DOWN GENTLY... AND OPENED THE GATE FOR RITA...
SH-H-H-H! HE'S ASLEEP... IN THAT LEAR-TD OVER THERE!
LISTEN TO HIS WHEEZING, RASPING, CHOKED BREATHING!
HUNGRILY, THE COUPLE BEGAN TO EAT THE TASTY FRUIT! ONE AFTER ANOTHER THEY SWALLOWED..
M-M-M-M-M! THEY'RE GOOD, AREN'T THEY?
YES... I...
YAEEEEEEEEH!
THE SHADOWY FIGURE CAME AT THEM, SCREAMING HOARSELY...
DICK! IT'S HIM!
KEEP AWAY YOU FOOL!
DICK SWITCHED ON THE SIGNAL LIGHT AND SHINED IT AT THE APPROACHING FIGURE..
OH, MY GOD!
EEEEEEEEEEE!
DICK FIRED AGAIN AND AGAIN AT THE HIDEOUS, MOLD-COVERED, ROTTED, FOUL-SMELLING THING! IT STOPPED FOR A MOMENT ..THEN SANK TO THE GROUND... ITS WIDE STARING EYES LIKE PIN-POINTS OF LIGHT IN ITS SHAPELESS HEAD..
HOW... HORRIBLE!
LOOK! HE... IT—IT'S DISSOLVING INTO A POOL OF PULSATING PUTRESCENT SLIME!
RITA STARED AT THE HALF-EATEN PIECE OF FRUIT IN HER HAND THEN AT DICK! DICK STARED BACK! FEELINGS OF NAUSEA AND REVULSION SWEPT OVER THEM...
HEH, HEH! AND SO MY STORY ENDS! AND IT IS THE END FOR DICK AND RITA, KIDDIES! SOON THE LITTLE SORES WILL BEGIN TO APPEAR... AND THEN—. HEH, HEH ...WELL, JUST USE YOUR IMAGINATION! BUT IF YOU DON'T HAVE AN IMAGINATION, AND YOU NEED ANOTHER FEAR-FIX, CHECK OUT HOW TO GET MORE EC MAGS! JUST READ THE OLD WITCH'S HIGHE-. NEXT IN THIS ISSUE ...AND FIND OUT HOW TO SET YOURS! 'SYE, NOW! DON'T FORGET! KEEP A STIFF..



THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE

President and CEO—Stephen A Geppi

Publisher—Russ Cochran

Wood, Wood he's pretty good! Feldstein's the best, VK a pest! and The Old Witch is the best of 'em all

Tony Lewandowski — Oak Forest IL

Crypty, Crypty, he's three hundred and fifty! Ghastly's the ultimate; when he puts his skull to it! And Tony Lewandowski is...is a great guy! (Rats!) —OW

Un-dear Old Witch,

I just started reading your stories and I LOVE them

All of your tales are so gruesome and scary My bones rattle when I read them I love them at night time I especially like 'Diminishing Returns!' Keep up the good work.

Jamie Haynes — Lewiston, CA

Glad you LOVE them! I think you're great And Tony Lewandowski is greatski. (Still not as good! Rats!) —OW

What's up Old Witch?

I just finished reading HAUNT #8 and it was delicious! "Hounded to Death!" was truly good work

Shame [on] Mike McKnight and Duane Chandler for saying that you're ugly You are revolting filth Beyond ugly During your many hundred years of rotting you must've went through a lot of radioactive changes Well I still love your title best and yet I am still ordering EC back issues like there isn't any tomorrow Later, you wrinkled nut! [Print address, please.]

Shannon Jones age 17 — 4535 Foote ST NE, Washington, DC 20019

Let's cool it on the reverse-compliments, or for you there WON'T be any tomorrow! Keep on my good side—keep buyin'! —OW

Dear EC comics,

I've been collecting your comics for a long time one year exactly, and so far I've read about the following things vampires, werewolves, zombies murderers, mummies and ghouls. But I haven't read about dinosaurs. I think dinosaurs are scary and belong in EC comics, don't you? If you wrote about dinosaurs coming back to life it would make an interesting story My friends and I like reading about dinosaurs a lot, so please try to fit a dinosaur story into an EC comic book. Your devoted fan

Joey A Richardson — Bettendorf, IA

You and your dino-devouring friends should be reading EC's SF titles; WEIRD SCIENCE, WEIRD FANTASY and INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION (formerly WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY). That's in addition to, not instead of! That way, you have your corpses and eat it too!

Joey A. Richardson, the "good-guy" list (of The Witch) is on! And, Tony Lewandowski—it's "only you," and howski! (Success!)

Dear Old Witch,

I'm writing to you because you are so much scarier than VK and CK I can't believe The CK has his own show and you and VK don't! Here are some questions I would really appreciate it if you answered them really well The first question is, is there a very possible chance that you and VK will get your show? The second question is can you make powerful spells without your pot? The third question is, are you powerful enough to make a spell that will make you invincible? The last question is, can you kill people or destroy things with lightning or anything from your hands? Thank you Mrs. Witch!

Andy Park — Los Angeles CA

Well, I that I had an offer to put me on the tube; came to find out what they said was a show with me would go DOWN the TUBES!

Well, I use my CAULDRON (not POT!) to stew up some stories for you little grue-hounds. I cast spells at my leisure. Unfortunately, the Anonymous Editor has—Spell-Check!

Well, I can make myself invincible. The real imponderable is, can I then make something that can hurt me?!

Well, my hands are pretty powerful—'scuse I have a Fistful of Dollars!

I hope I have answered these, uh, well —OW

Dear VK CK, OW

You guys are the best! Especially you CK, you usually have the best stories. [**WHAT!**]

I just finished reading THE VAULT OF HORROR #8 I loved "Daddy Lost His Head!!" and "Reunion!" by OW

I like your comics because you don't have to get into the complicated and at times even boring networks of superhero comics (I'm not saying all superhero comics are bad, just most of them.)

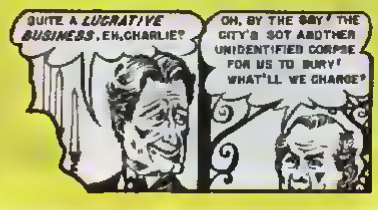
Hey guys, why don't you get those hairy moles removed from your noses (I know a good plastic surgeon!) And you might want to try getting a toothbrush

Please print my whole address so that other fans can write to me I'd love to hear from them! I'm a boy 15 [years old] A fellow cackler,

Erin Van Drimmelen — 548 Saint Nick DR, Memphis, TN 38117

DESPITE your misguided tolerance of those other two GhouLunatics, I'm glad you liked "Reunion!". Remember, 25% of both their tepid titles is a story by ME, making them worth the price of admission. —OW

NEXT ISSUE



Dear Russ (and company of ghosts, ghouls, fiends zombies, and the like)

I am writing to tell you of a video that I happened to come across called "The Screaming Woman." It is a movie by Ray Bradbury, and I think it is pertinent to us who devour your comics.

I have a question about the authors and artists of the stories that get into your comics. Do you have any biographical information on any of them (for example, when they were born/died, what other things they might have drawn or written for, how long they worked with EC, etc.)? I guess since I work at a library I like to know the background of what I am reading and enjoying.

Since I had my letter printed in June I have got very interesting letters from a man in Tacoma, Washington, someone named Francis from Singapore, a girl from Cincinnati who just got her letter published in August issue of VAULT and last but not least a man from Canada. Thank you for printing my address. I love getting mail that is not a bill.

Patty Drummond — POB 482, Martins Ferry, OH 43935

I am second to none in being happy about the success of Revoltin' Ray over the years. That ol' screamin' woman screams for EC in CRIME 15, a bit more than a year from now. But if you can't wait, get 64-pg RCP CRYPT #2, $2 a copy plus s&h like it says at the bottom of this column.

[Hey, Witchie, perhaps we need to re-run the original EC "Artist of the Issue" features, they would be a good primer on the EC personnel. —Ed Anon]

Maybe you're right, keyboard-boy. Meantime, thanks to Patty for the puzzle we've run elsewhere in this column. —OW

Greetings my beloved goddess

After years of pent-up emotions which have gradually fed upon my weak love-stricken innards, I've finally built up enough courage to write to the woman who could make my brain deranged with passion and my stomach regurgitate my waffles at the same time!

Now my comment on the tales [in HAUNT 8] I was doin' the shady Shimmy with my guts wrapped around my ankles when I noticed that "Diminishing Returns!" credits were unknown! But I have a feeling it was you, my dear Old Witch, who wrote and illustrated that tale for insignificant me! Ya did it 'cause yer too shy to express yer true feelings fer me!

I do have one complaint, though: there are only 7 portraits of ya in the issue! To relieve my infernal suffering you should print pin-ups of yerself, which we can remove without desecrating our much cherished comic! I'm only saying this 'cause yer heebie-jeebie inducing mug is the reason why I purchase yer book and the only reason I haven't placed my head in my waffle-iron!

So, my repulsive, earwax-swillin' hag of a woman, please look into that black, cancerous mound of a muscle ya call a heart and give me a reply—'cause I think I'll be having waffles very soon. Yer devoted miscreant,

Ivo musa XOXOX — Calgary, AB

Problem solved, loverboy: buy extra copies of my comics and cut out the pics of me for your wallet! Sorry about the waffles, I'm not at my best at breakfast!

Are those 'hugs and kisses' after your signature, or is your last name the same as my favorite bouillon? —OW

Dear Russ,

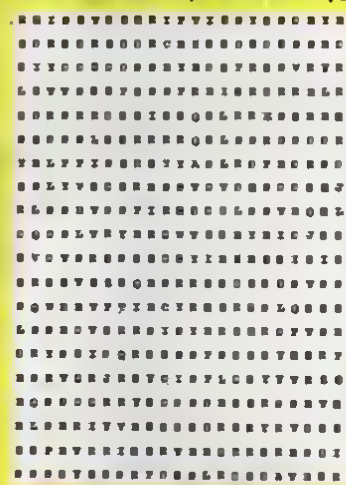
CRIME #5 is the only CRIME I have because I had a picture I drew in it. The last story was called "Partially Dissolved!"

It was told by The Old Witch. I was wondering if it will be in a future issue of CRYPT, HAUNT or VAULT. I hope it will because I'd have to buy all the back issues [of CRIME] because I want all the stories of CRYPT, HAUNT, and VAULT.

Eric Kazen — Richmond HTS, OH

Altho EC did re-run a few (a VERY few!) stories, my stories in CRIME (superheaded "The Haunt of Fear" stories, everywhere else I called 'em "The Witch's Cauldron") were NOT re-run anywhere else! To get them (and almost every one had Ghastly art, so you GOTTA have 'em!) you gotta get CRIME SUSPENSTORIES! Pretty tricky, huh? —OW

SEARCH-A-WORD PUZZLE
PATTY DRUMMOND, MARTINS FERRY, OH



Dig up the horror-words on CRYPT-ed in this gruesome grid. Send your list to this department (There's no reason to send in this page, or a copy of it. Make a list, you lazy lizards!) Earliest postmark of the best solution gets the glory. —OW

This month: INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION #8 and CRIME #9. Next month: The 10th issues of CRYPT, WEIRD SCIENCE and SHOCK. Don't forget VAULT, WEIRD FANTASY and TWO-FISTED! Get them at your local comic book shop or SUBSCRIBE (see our ad in this comic for details)!

BACK ISSUES. CRYPT #1, $3 each (subject to availability). 80 others up thru issue #8, $1.50 each. Issues #4 and up, $2 each. Add $6 per order ($12 outside US) for S&H.

We want letters! Write to:
HAUNT
RUSS COCHRAN
POB 469
WEST PLAINS MO 65775

THIS COMIC REPRINTS
HAUNT OF FEAR #9 (SEP/OCT 1951)

COVER by Al Feldstein
"Wants So Horrible?" — Graham Ingels
"Forbidden Fruit" — Joe Orlando
"The Age-Old Story!" — Jack Kamen
"The Gorilla's Paw!" — Jack Davis

We welcome letters of comment. We cannot promise to acknowledge, publish or answer letters. We edit for clarity, accuracy and length. We automatically withhold street address and zip code unless you clearly state you wish same published. We attempt to acknowledge publication of letters. In no case send your address on the individual letter.

More items of general EC interest, collected into this special column called. .

FAN CLUB NEWS! #7

PRESENTED BY THE VAULT-KEEPER

I was going through a price guide when I found they had made a Tales from the CRYPT OF TERROR in 3D. Tell me are you going to reprint it or do we have to pay over three hundred dollars for one? Please print my address.

Jan Sosebee
POB 256
Eton, GA 30724

Is there a possibility that you might reprint the EC titles THREE DIMENSIONAL TALES FROM THE CRYPT OF TERROR and THREE DIMENSIONAL EC CLASSICS? As a collector of your reprints and a 3D enthusiast I'd really enjoy seeing them back in print. Why not let some other EC FanAddicts decide by inviting their letters of support?

John Robinson
Halifax, NS

The two books (John's letter lists the official wording of the titles) were 3C's only published 3D material. A third (SF) book was not published but was prepared. We want to do them in hardback someday; maybe after that they'd appear in 32-pg comics. —VK

Dear Tale-Telling Ghouls

I enjoy all your comic books very much. After buying several other [reprints] that were printed out of order, I came upon the actual (in order) reprints. I know the total plan is to reprint all CRYPT, VAULT and HAUNT, but do you also plan to reprint all three TALES OF TERROR ANNUALS, too? If so, please tell me so I can have all the horror comics that you publish.

Say hi to Russ and tell him to stop writing notes to The Old Witch in crayon.

Eric Grawe
Burlington, WI

With the exception of the cover art, the contents of 3C's Annual contained no new material. The 'guts' were four coverless (presumably de-covered) copies of back issues chosen from within a theme but otherwise at random. Thus, it would be pointless—as well as impossible!—to reprint them! The official titles were: TALES OF TERROR (3 issues), WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY (2 issues) and TWO-FISTED ANNUAL (2 issues).

Hey, EC FanAddicts! This is your last chance to receive a FREE (yes, you read that right) issue of HORROR FROM THE CRYPT OF FEAR. Many corpses have already risen from the grave and snatched up most of the copies but we still have about 40-50 copies left for those of you who we missed out! We discuss EC's wonderful horror work in our first deadly issue. So don't delay! Dig out of your grave while the dirt's still fresh and pull up a cruddy cauldron to write on so we can send HORROR FROM THE CRYPT OF FEAR to your own Vault or Crypt!

Send name and address (and anything else of interest: perhaps your mother-in-law's severed tongue or your school teacher's bloody yardstick) to

Sam Kingston
30 Ivy DR
HORROR FROM THE CRYPT OF FEAR
Midvale, UT 84047

Dear Vault-Keeper,

November, 1949. I walked into Murphey's candy store and bought a copy of WAR AGAINST CRIME. You, VK, were on page one, hunched over on a stone throne deep in the VAULT OF HORROR, crooking your finger at me, a 9-year-old kid, and saying "Come closer." I did.

Good News! The third issue of GOOD LORD!, the official newsletter/fanzine of the EC REGISTER, has just been released by ABNER DOON PRODUCTIONS, a non-profit organization of GhouLunaticHelpers.

We are looking for: V-K devotees (like me and Abner), C-K freaks, OW minions, SCI-FI cats, MAD lovers, SHOCK, WAR and CRIME fans, REPRINT addicts, EC ORIGINAL COLLECTORS, EC ORIGINAL ART COLLECTORS, PRE-TREND, NEW TREND and NEW DIRECTION dudes. In short: anyone of any age with any interest in EC comics.

Anyone who wishes to join us, heh-heh, has only to send a stamp to the EC REGISTER, ABNER DOON PRODUCTIONS, 8801 Atlantic Avenue, Margate City, NJ 08402.

Christopher Cook Gilmore

Below is a re-run of the dope on another fan's project, just in case anyone missed it from a previous column. —VK

I wish to start a dream of mine: THE NATIONAL E.C. FAN CLUB. In my club, all serious EC fans will receive great benefits including a one year (six-issue) subscription to the club's official fanzine—THE NATIONAL E.C. BULLETIN!

Membership to the club costs $14.00. This money is just under enough to cover the publication costs. I make *no* profit! If you decide you want to join and don't have $14.00 (US Currency), you may send just enough for your subscription ($12.00) and send the extra two bucks for your membership package later on.

Also: if you are worried the club magazine SUCKS, you can order a sample issue for $2.00.

THE INTERNATIONAL E.C. FAN CLUB
c/o Philip M. Smith, President/Founder
5947 Colgate St.
Philadelphia, PA 19120

Regarding Andrianne Cook's request in FCN #5 for "a prose history of EC," I suggest 'Completely MAD: A History of the Comic Book and Magazine' (91, Maria Reidelbach, Little, Brown and Co.).

Concerning "a history of American horror and crime comics in the 1950s," look for "The Illustrated History of Horror Comics, Series #1" (91, Taylor Publishing) and "Crime Comics, Series #5" (93, Taylor Publishing), both are by Mike Benton.

You have my permission to publish my address.

Vinny Bellizia, Jr.
526 2nd AV
North Brunswick, NY 08902-3316

I read with interest the letter by Phil Smith that suggested starting an EC Fan Club. I'd like to pass along an idea. There is a book called "Organized Obsessions" by Deborah M. Burek and Martin Conners that lists 1001 offbeat associations, fan clubs and microsocieties you can join! From the Abbott and Costello Fan Club to Rock Horror fan clubs, they're all there.

Write to Oranized Obsessions, c/o Visable Ink Press, 835 Penobscot Building, Detroit, Michigan 48226-4004. Send them the full name of your group, include your address with zip, telephone number with area code and fax if possible. Write a page of information on your group and send along any brochure or leaflets you have. With any luck, it'll end up in the next edition. There's not one listing yet on comic clubs. Shouldn't EC be among the first?

Phil Marsh
Sunnyvale, CA

And you-all that WE were weird! —VK

Write to this department like so: FAN CLUB NEWS, RUSS COCHRAN, POB 469, WEST PLAINS, MO 65775.

We welcome letters of criticism. We cannot promise to acknowledge, publish or answer letters. We edit for clarity, accuracy and length. We automatically withhold street address and zip code unless you clearly state you wish them published. We attempt to acknowledge publication of letters. To do so we need your address on the individual letter.

HERE'S A DISGUSTING NEW WRINKLE IN...

THE AGE-OLD STORY!



HARRIET TURNED THE CORNER INTO THE FAMILIAR TENEMENT BLOCK! IT WAS DESERTED! GAPING BLACK WINDOWS, LIKE EYE-SOCKETS IN HEAPED SKULLS, STARED OUT AT THE LITTERED SIDEWALKS! HARRIET'S HIGH HEELS RAPPED A STACCATO AS SHE HURRIED BY BENEATH THE LONE STREET-LAMP...

SHE TURNED INTO AN ALLEY AS A CLOCK SOMEWHERE OUT IN THE SLEEPING CITY TOLLED THREE MOURNFUL WAILS, SIGNIFYING THE EARLY MORNING HOUR! SHE MOVED PAST BATTERED ASHCANS ALIVE WITH GREY, FAST-MOVING FORMS ..AND FINALLY STOPPED BEFORE A SHABBY DOOR! SHE RAISED HER TINY FIST AND KNOCKED HEAVILY! NO SOUND CAME FROM WITHIN...

MEL MUST BE ASLEEP! HE DOESN'T EXPECT ME...SO *SOON!* THANK GOD I'M *THROUGH!*

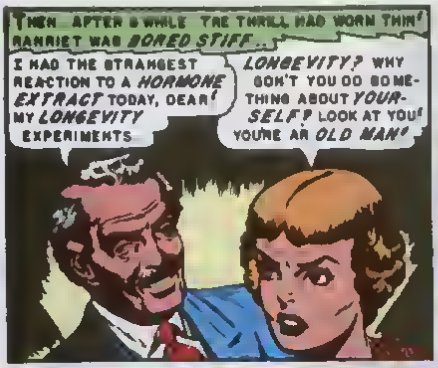
HARRIET KNOCKED AGAIN... LOUDER THIS TIME! INSIDE, SOMEONE FINALLY STIRRED! HEAVY FOOTSTEPS APPROACHED! IN A MOMENT SHE'D BE IN MEL'S ARMS... AT LAST! AS SHE WAITED FOR THE ROTTED DOOR TO SWING OPEN, HARRIET'S THOUGHTS WENT BACK...BACK TO THE BEGINNING. THE WHOLE THING HAD STARTED A YEAR AGO...IN THAT VERY ALLEY...

THIS IS IT, HARRIET! IT'S PRETTY DISMAL, I GUESS, BUT AT LEAST WE'LL START OUR MARRIAGE WITH A *ROOF* OVER OUR HEADS...

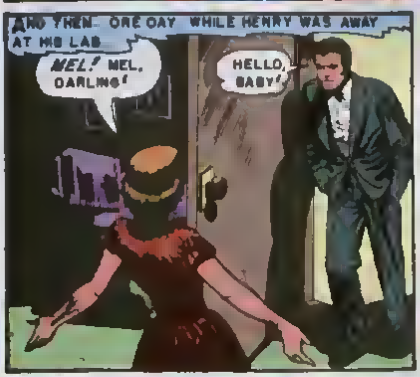
OH, NO, MEL! *NO!*


YES, MEL HAD PROPOSED TO HER THAT NIGHT! HE'D ASKED HER TO MARRY HIM! THEN, HE'D BROUGHT HER THERE
NO, MEL! YOU CAN'T EXPECT ME TO LIVE IN THIS...THIS ROTTEN HOLE!
BUT, HARRIET! IT'LL ONLY BE FOR A WHILE! TILL I GET STARTED...
SHE'D BEEN SHOCKED! OH, SURE, MEL WAS A NICE GUY. YOUNG GOOD LOOKING! BUT TO BEGIN A MARRIAGE IN THAT MISERABLE HOVEL..
I'M...I'M SORRY, MEL! LOOK ME UP AGAIN, WHEN YOU CAN OFFER ME SOMETHING BETTER!
HARRIET, WAIT!
MEL HAD CAUGHT UP WITH HER.. PLEADED WITH HER..
BUT, YOU SAID YOU LOVED ME!
NOT THAT MUCH, HONEY! NOT ENOUGH FOR THAT!
THAT WAS HOW IT'D BEGUN! HARRIET REMEMBERED IT ALL SO CLEARLY! SHE'D LEFT MEL STANDING IN THE MOUTH OF THE GARBAGE-STREWN ALLEY, AND HAD CAUGHT A BUS UPTOWN...
THAT'S ALL, BROTHER! I'VE HAD ENOUGH! I'M FED UP TO HERE WITH FURNISHED ROOMS AND TENEMENTS!
BUS STOP
SHE'D GOTTEN OFF SOMEWHERE CLOSE TO PARK AVENUE! AGGRESSIVELY, SHE'D MADE HER WAY TOWARD IT, GAZING UP AT THE LUXURIOUS APARTMENT WINDOWS LONGINGLY...
IT'S MONEY I'M AFTER NOW! MONEY AND ALL THE THINGS IT CAN BUY...LIKE THOSE PLUSH PENTHOUSES UP THERE..AND CARS...AND SERVANTS!
SUDDENLY, SHE'D GOTTEN A CRAZY URGE TO SEE THE INSIDE OF ONE OF THOSE PARK AVENUE PALACES! SHE'D SAUNTERED PAST A SUSPICIOUS DOOR-MAN.. STEPPED INTO A SELF-SERVICE ELEVATOR ..AND PRESSED THE BUTTON MARKED 'PENTHOUSE' WHEN THE ELEVATOR HAD STOPPED, SHE'D GOTTEN OFF! MUSIC AND LAUGHTER EXPLODED AS SHE OPENED THE DOOR...
LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE'S HAVING A PARTY...
NO ONE HAD EVER NOTICED HER COME IN! THEY WERE ALL TOO BUSY HAVING A GOOD TIME! SHE'D HESITATED ON THE TERRACED ENTRANCE...ALMOST READY TO TURN AND RUN, WHEN...
WELL! DON'T JUST STAND THERE! COME ON DOWN! HAVE A DRINK!
TH...THANK YOU!


HANRIET SMILED TO REHSELF AS SRE WAITED FDH MEL TO COME TO TRE DOOR! THAT WAS WHEN SHE HAD FIRST MET RENRY
MAY I DRIVE YOU ROME, HANRIET?
OF COUNSE, HENHY!
HENRY WAS OLD . . IN HIS FIFTIES! BUT HE WAS RICH! AS RE'D DRIVEN HER DOWNTOWR IR RIS CADILLAC .
STRARGE TRAT I'VE REVEN MET YDU BEFONE, HANHIET! NAY I SEE YOU ABAIR? SAY, DIHRER TOMORROW?
I'D LOVE IT, HERRY!
TRE NEXT RIGHT, SHE'D MET HENRY AT A SWARKY EAST-SIDE CLUB! THE CHECK MUBY HAVE GOME TO FORTY BUCKS! AFTEN . . .
HOW ABOUT A NIBRT-CAP AT MY PLACE?
SOUNDS ALL RIGHT TO ME!
IT'D BEEN WREN SHE FIRST SAW RERHY'S BEAUTIFUL EXFENSIVELY FURNISHED APAHTMENT THAT HARRIET HAD MADE UF RER MIND! SHE WAS GOING TO MARRY THE OLD GOBBER
LIKE IT?
OH, RENNY! IT'S BREATHTAKING...
IT HADN'T TAKEN VERY LORG AFTER THAT' A FEW MORE EVERINGS AT RIS HOME, AND HENRY RAD FRO-FD BED
I CAN BIVE YOU EVERYTHING HARRIET! ALL OF THIS! JUST BAY, 'YES''
YES, HEHRT, I'LL MARRY YD U!
AHD SO SHE'D BECOME MRS REHNY NABTERSON, WIFE OF TRE FAMOUB RESEARCR BIDLOBIST
I'LL BE AT MY LABONATORY IF YOU WANT TO CALL ME, HANRIET! BOOD-BYE, DARLING!
'BYE, DEAR!
AT FINST IT HAD BEEN EXCITING! HEW CLOTHES. . SHOPFING SFREES JEWELRY REH DWN CAR! BUT AFTEN A WRILE, RERRY'S ABE BEGAH TO TELL
NOT TOHIGHT, HANRIET! I RAD A HARD DAY AT THE LAB! HO RIGHT-CLUB, TONIGRT!
BUT, HENNY! THENE'S A NEW BROW! YOU PROMISED . .
3


THEN... AFTER A WHILE THE THRILL HAD WORN THIN! HARRIET WAS BORED STIFF...
I HAD THE STRANGEST REACTION TO A HORMONE EXTRACT TODAY, DEAR! MY LONGEVITY EXPERIMENTS
LONGEVITY? WHY DON'T YOU DO SOMETHING ABOUT YOURSELF? LOOK AT YOU! YOU'RE AN OLD MAN!


HARRIET! LOOK AT ME! I'M YOUNG! I WANT TO ENJOY LIFE! INSTEAD, WE SIT HOME NIGHT AFTER NIGHT... IN THIS BIG EXPENSIVE BARN!


AND THEN ONE DAY WHILE HENRY WAS AWAY AT HIS LAB...
MEL! MEL, DARLING!
HELLO, BABY!


SHE'D FLUNG HERSELF INTO MEL'S ARMS ..KISSED HIM AGAIN AND AGAIN.
OH, MEL! I'VE MISSED YOU SO!
YEAH! I'LL BET!


AND THEN HARRIET HAD THOUGHT OF IT! A PLAN! A WONDERFUL WONDERFUL PLAN...
DON'T BE ANGRY, HONEY! I'M DOING IT FOR US!
US! THAT'S A LAUGH!


OH, MEL! REALLY! HENRY'S RICH! RICHER THAN YOU'LL EVER BE! I MARRIED HIM FOR HIS DOUGH! WHEN I GET IT
YOU.. YOU WOULDN'T KID ME, WOULD YOU, BABY?


LOOK, MEL! IT'S GOING TO BE EASY! I'LL GET HIM TO SIGN OVER HIS HOLDINGS TO ME... LITTLE BY LITTLE! AND WHEN I HAVE IT ALL, I'LL DITCH HIM! THEN IT'LL BE JUST YOU AND ME...ON EASY STREET!
YOU'RE SERIOUS, AREN'T YOU?


DEAD SERIOUS, HONEY!
C'MERE, YOU LITTLE SHE-DEVIL!
THAT NIGHT, HARRIET HAD BEGUN HER INSIDIOUS CAMPAIGN...
THAT'S RIGHT, HENRY! I'M GOING TO TAKE A LITTLE TRIP!
DON'T LEAVE ME, HARRIET! PLEASE! I NEED YOU.
I'LL INCREASE YOUR ALLOWANCE! I'LL TRANSFER SOME MONEY TO YOUR ACCOUNT! PLEASE..
REALLY? HOW... MUCH?
SHE'D SEPT IT UP! SHE'D PLAYED ON HIS EMOTIONS, HIS EGO HIS INSECURITY...
I'M YOUNG, HENRY! YOU HAVEN'T ANYTHING TO OFFER ME
I WON'T LET YOU GO! I CAN'T! I'D BE NOTHING WITHOUT YOU! MY WHOLE ACCOUNT! YOU CAN HAVE THE WHOLE THING...
AND NEL'D KEEP COMING..CHECKING HER PROGRESS...
IT'S GOING TO BE A WHILE YET, NEL! THERE'S STILL HIS STOCKS AND BONDS..
I CAN WAIT, HARRIET! YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND ME WHEN IT'S DONE...
THEN ONE EVENING
I'M FED UP, HENRY! FED UP! YOU'RE OLD! I HAVE NO SECURITY! WHAT IF YOU SHOULD SUDDENLY DIE?
MY BONDS! MY STOCKS! YOU CAN HAVE THEM ALL! JUST STAY WITH ME, DARLING! DON'T LEAVE ME... PLEASE...
SO SHE'D GOTTEN IT ALL! EVERY CENT! THEN TONIGHT SHE'D TOLD HIM...
I'M THROUGH, HENRY! I'M TAKING THE MORNING TRAIN TO RENO! YOU'RE USELESS TO ME, NOW!
I CAN'T STOP YOU! I HAVE NOTHING MORE TO OFFER YOU!
5


WHILE SHE WAS CHECKING, HE'D ENTERED HER ROOM WEEKLY, CARRYING A TRAY...
I...I GUESS I'M JUST AN OLD SENTINENTAL FOOL, HARRIET! BUT...WOULD YOU DRINK A FAREWELL TOAST WITH ME?
SURE, HENRY! WHY NOT?
WELL! HERE'S TO YOUR LONGEVITY EXPERIMENTS! THEY'RE ALL YOU'VE GOT LEFT, NOW, SUCKER!
GOOD-BYE... YOUNG, LOVELY HARRIET!
THEN SHE'D LEFT HIM FOR GOOD! SHE'D SENT HER BASS TO THE STATION AND DONE DOWNTOWN TO GET MEL! NOW SHE STOOD BEFORE HIS DOOR...WAITING FOR HIM TO ANSWER HER KNOCK.
WHO'S THERE?
IT'S ME, MEL! OPEN UP!
THE SHABBY DOOR SWUNG OPEN! A THIN BLADE OF LIGHT SLICED THROUGH THE DARKNESS! MEL STARED AT HER
WHA...WHAT DO YOU WANT? WHO IN BLAZES ARE YOU?
MEL! IT'S ME! HARRIET! STOP CLOWNING!
MEL GLARED AT HER IN ANGER.
GET OUT OF HERE, YOU OLD HAG! YOU'RE DRUNK!
MEL! I—
MEL SLAMMED THE DOOR! HARRIET STOOD THERE, SHOCKED! SHE COULDN'T UNDERSTAND IT! SHE FUMBLED IN HER BAG AND PULLED OUT A MIRROR! SHE STEPPED OUT INTO THE LIGHT FROM THE STREET-LAMP AND LOOKED AT HER FACE.
HEE, HEE! YEP! HENRY DECIDED THAT HARRIET HAD TO BE TAUGHT A LESSON! SO HE SPIKED HER FAREWELL DRINK WITH A HORMONE HE'D DISCOVERED AN AGING HORMONE! RIGHT NOW, HENRY'S SITTING IN HIS PLUSH APARTMENT WAITING FOR HARRIET! DON'T WORRY, RIDDIES! SHE'LL GO BACK! REMEMBER HENNY LOVES HER! HE'LL BE ABLE TO TOLERATE HER REPULSIVE OLD FACE! OF COURSE, SHE'S NOT AS DISGUSTING AS I AM! NO ONE COULD BE! IF YOU'D LIKE TO SEE ME SOME MORE BE SURE AND SUBSCRIBE AND GET ALL MY BACK ISSUES! READ THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE, AND FIND OUT HOW TO GET 'EM! BUT I HEAR THE CRYPT-KEEPER PANTING WAITING TO TELL HIS HORROR STORY...SO, 'BYE NOW!

THE CRYPT OF TERROR

NOW I SEE IT'S *MY* TURN TO *'GUEST'* IR *THE OLD WITCH'S HAG-MAG!* ARO RATURALLY I AM GIVEN THE *LAST SPOT!* THEY'RE ALL *JEALOUS* BECAUDE MY STONIES ARE ALWAYS TRE *MOST HORRIBLE!* WELL, THEY'RE *RIGHT!* AND THIS TIME I *OUTDO* MYSELF! CORE INTO THE *CRYPT OF TERROR!* I AM YOUR HOST, *THE CRYPT-KEEPER!* SINCE YOU'RE ALL EABER, I'LL WASTE RO TIME IR BEBINNIRO TRE BLOOD-CURDLING TALE I CALL

THE GORILLA'S PAW!





FLOYO BTOOD OUTSIDE THE CURIO SHOP WINDOW GAZIRO IN AT TNE WEIRO ASSORTMENT OF OBJECTS THAT CROWDED EVERY AVAILABLE INCH OF DISPLAY SPACE! AS RIS EYES MOVED FROM ONE ARTICLE TO THE NEXT, FLOYO BEGAN TO FEEL UREADY! IT WASN'T THAT THE CURIOS WERE FRIBTENING! FLOYD COULD NOT UNDERSTANO IT! THEN HE LOOKED UP! BEHIND THE WINDOW DISPLAY BTOOD THE SHOP-KEEPER .STARING AT RIM WITH SMALL, WRIRKLED, BEADY EYES . .

WHAT'S THE OLO BUZZARO BAWKING AT *ME* FOR? OO I LOOK LIKE I'O BE CRAZY ENOUBN TO *BUY* SOME OF TNIB JUNK? NE.. *HUH?* NE'B MOTIONING FOR ME TO *COME IN!*




AT FIRST FLOYD WAS TEMPTED TO TURN AWAY... BUT THE LOOK ON THE OLD SHOPKEEPER'S FACE WAS ONE OF GRIM CONCERN, SO HE SHRUGGED AND ENTERED THE SHOP! AS HE OPENED THE DOOR, A BELL TINKLED SOMEWHERE IN THE NEAR...
DID YOU WANT ME FOR SOMETHIN', MISTER?
COME IN, YOUNG MAN! COME IN!
THE FOUL ODOR OF STALENESS AND DUSTY DECAY SEARED FLOYD'S NOSTRILS! HE LOOKED ABOUT THE DARK INTERIOR OF THE SHOP...
LISTEN, MISTER! I'M NOT IN THE MARKET FOR ANY OF THIS...
BUT I HAVE SOMETHING I THINK YOU'LL WANT!
THE OLD MAN LIFTED A STRONG WOODEN BOX FROM A DRAWER AND PLACED IT ON THE COUNTER! FLOYD TURNED TO GO...
NOT ME, OLD TIMER! I CAN THINK OF LOTS BETTER WAYS OF SPENDIN' MY DOUGH!
WAIT! JUST LOOK AT IT! THAT'S ALL I ASK!
THE SHOP-KEEPER TOOK A KEY FROM HIS POCKET AND UNLOCKED THE SMALL OAK CHEST! HE LIFTED BACK THE LID...
GOOD LORD! WHAT IN BLAZES IS THAT DISGUSTING THING?
IT'S A MUMMIFIED GORILLA'S PAW, MY FRIEND! A RARE SPECIMEN! I'LL SELL IT CHEAP...
FLOYD SHUDDERED AS HE STUDIED THE BLACK-SKINNED HAIRY PAW! HE TURNED TO THE SHOP-KEEPER AND BURST OUT LAUGHING...
AND WHAT IN THE WORLD WOULD I WANT WITH AN UGLY GORILLA PAW?
THAT'S UP TO YOU! IF YOU WANT TO BUY IT, IT'S TWENTY-FIVE DOLLARS... WITHOUT THE CHEST! THAT'S EXTRA!
FLOYD SHOOK HIS HEAD AND STARTED FOR THE DOOR...
TWENTY-FIVE BUCKS... FOR THAT MONSTROSITY! NOT ME, OLD MAN! FIND YOURSELF ANOTHER SUCKER! I...
I...I WISH YOU'D BUY IT!
FLOYD STOPPED IN HIS TRACKS AT THE OLD MAN'S WORDS! HE STARED DOWN AT THE MUMMIFIED GORILLA PAW! A STRANGE FEELING CAME OVER HIM! HE LIFTED THE DRIED EXTREMITY FROM THE BOX AND STUDIED IT! THERE WAS SOMETHING ABOUT IT THAT FASCINATED HIM...
THEN... YOU'LL TAKE IT?
Y..YES! I'LL TAKE IT! I...I LIKE IT!
2

FLOYD PAID THE OLD MAN THE TWENTY-FIVE DOLLARS AND POCKETED THE MUMMIFIED PAW! THEN HE LEFT THE SHOP! SOON HE ARRIVED AT THE RUN-DOWN TENEMENT WHERE HE LIVED! ONCE IN HIS ROOM, HE FLUNG THE PAW ON THE BUREAU AND CURSED...

I MUST HAVE BEEN *CRAZY*! I DON'T KNOW WHAT GOT *INTO* ME! *TWENTY-FIVE BUCKS* FOR *THAT* HORRIBLE THING! WHY DID I *DO* IT? I *WISH* I HADN'T BOUGHT IT...

FLOYD UNDRESSED, TURNED OUT THE LIGHT AND WENT TO BED! DURING THE NIGHT HE WAS AWAKENED BY A SCRATCHING SOUND... BUT, THINKING IT WAS A CAT, TURNED OVER AND FELL BACK TO SLEEP! THE NEXT MORNING WHEN HE AWOKE...

WHAT THE...? *THE GORILLA PAW*! IT'S *COVERED* BY SOMETHING! IT...IT LOOKS LIKE... *MONEY*!

FLOYD RUSHED TO THE BUREAU, LIFTED THE CRISP BILLS FROM THE HAIRY PAW AND COUNTED THEM...

THERE'S... *TWENTY-FIVE DOLLARS* HERE!

FLOYD STARED AT THE MONEY AND THEN AT THE MUMMIFIED LIMB! HE SCRATCHED HIS HEAD...

GRIPES! I DIDN'T PUT THIS DOUGH HERE! I WONDER WHERE...

LATER THAT DAY, FLOYD MET HIS TWO BEST FRIENDS OUTSIDE THEIR FAVORITE HANGOUT... THE POOL-ROOM! FLOYD DIDN'T MENTION A WORD ABOUT HIS LATEST PURCHASE FOR FEAR OF BEING RIBBED...

HEY, EDDIE! I'M *HUNGRY*! HOW 'BOUT YOU, FLOYD?

NAW! NOT ME, JOE!

ME NEITHER, JOE!

JOE, FLOYD'S HUNGRY FRIEND, SPIED AN UMBRELLA-COVERED PUSH-CART APPROACHING...

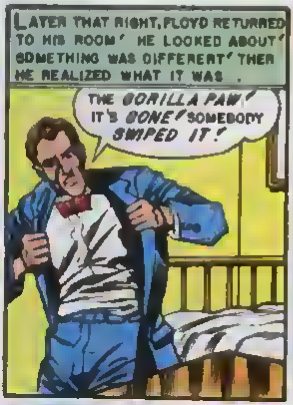
OH, BOY! LOOK! *HOT-DOGS*! I'M GONNA *GET* ME A COUPLE!

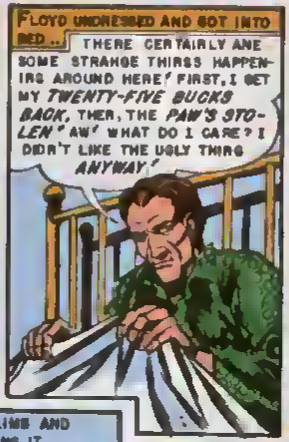
NOT FROM *THAT GUY*, JOE! THAT'S *JUNK* HE SELLS! YOU'LL GET *SICK*!

BUT JOE DIDN'T HEED FLOYD'S WARNING! WHEN HIS HUNGER HAD SUBSIDED, HE HAD DEVOURED FOUR HOT-DOGS OF QUESTIONABLE QUALITY FROM THE PUSH-CART. SOON, HOWEVER...

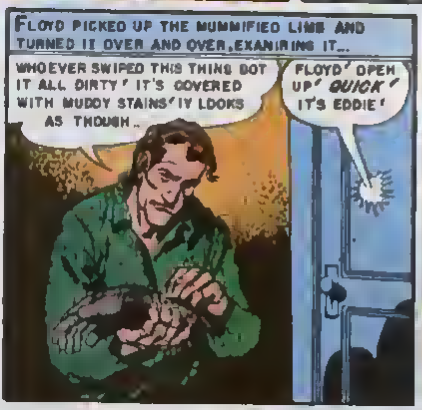
OOOOOH! I DON'T *FEEL* SO HOT! THEM 'DOGS' DIDN'T *AGREE* WITH ME! MY STOMACH...

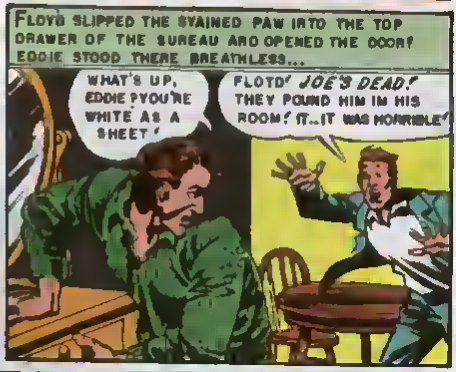
YOU *SEE*? YOU WOULDN'T *LISTEN* TO ME! I *TOLD* YOU THEY WERE *JUNK*! I *WISH* YOU DIDN'T *HAVE* A *STOMACH*! THEN YOU WOULDN'T BE *HUNGRY* ALL THE TIME...

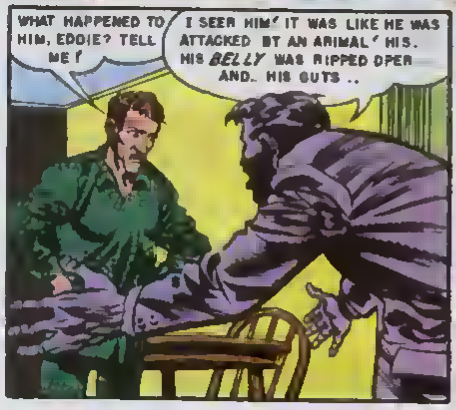

LATER THAT RIGHT, FLOYD RETURNED TO HIS ROOM. HE LOOKED ABOUT. SOMETHING WAS DIFFERENT. THEN HE REALIZED WHAT IT WAS.
THE GORILLA PAW! IT'S GONE! SOMEBODY SWIPED IT!

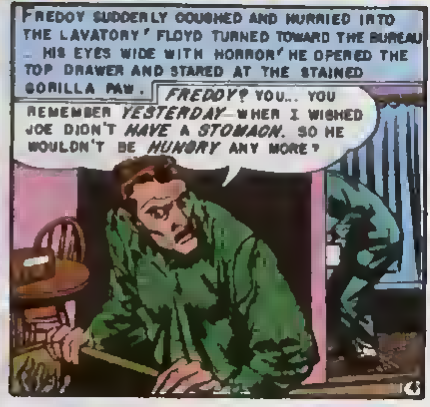

FLOYD UNDRESSED AND GOT INTO BED...
THERE CERTAINLY ARE SOME STRANGE THINGS HAPPENING AROUND HERE. FIRST, I GET MY TWENTY-FIVE BUCKS BACK, THEN, THE PAW'S STOLEN. AW, WHAT DO I CARE? I DIDN'T LIKE THE UGLY THING ANYWAY!

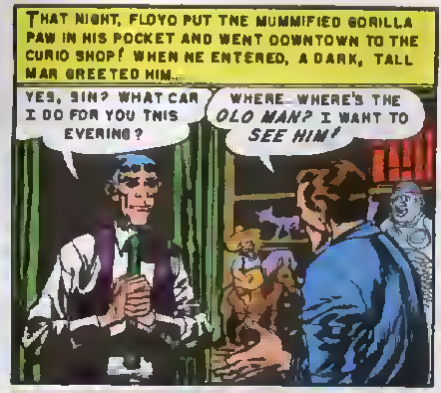

BUT THE NEXT MORNING, WHEN FLOYD AWOKE...
WELL, I'LL BE. THAT BLASTED GORILLA PAW IS BACK ON THE BUREAU!

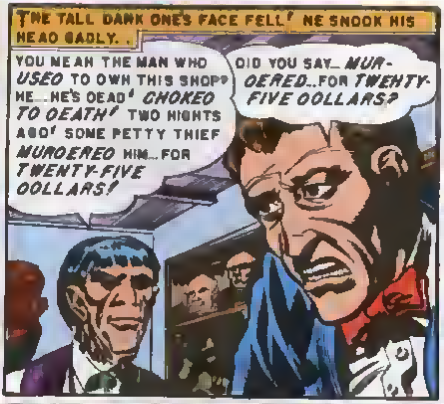

FLOYD PICKED UP THE MUMMIFIED LIMB AND TURNED IT OVER AND OVER, EXAMINING IT...
WHOEVER SWIPED THIS THING BOT IT ALL DIRTY. IT'S COVERED WITH MUDDY STAINS. IT LOOKS AS THOUGH..
FLOYD! OPEN UP! QUICK! IT'S EDDIE!

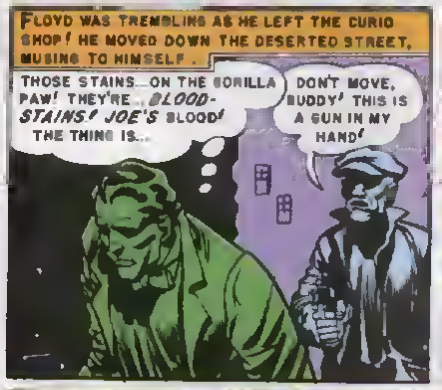

FLOYD SLIPPED THE STAINED PAW INTO THE TOP DRAWER OF THE BUREAU AND OPENED THE DOOR? EDDIE STOOD THERE BREATHLESS...
WHAT'S UP, EDDIE? YOU'RE WHITE AS A SHEET!
FLOYD! JOE'S DEAD! THEY FOUND HIM IN HIS ROOM! IT...IT WAS HORRIBLE!

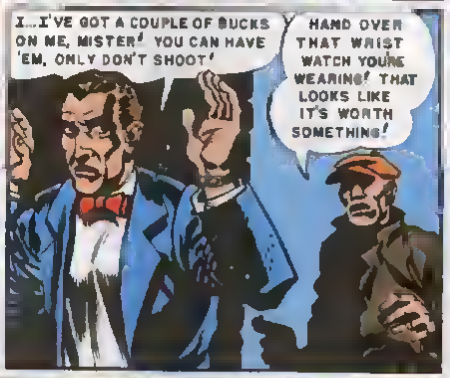

WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM, EDDIE? TELL ME!
I SEEN HIM! IT WAS LIKE HE WAS ATTACKED BY AN ANIMAL! HIS. HIS BELLY WAS RIPPED OPEN AND.. HIS GUTS..

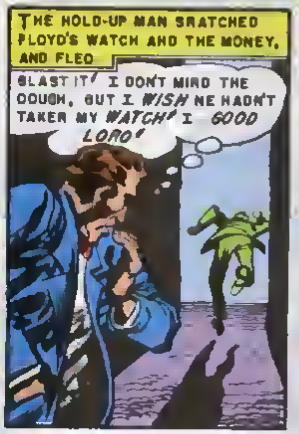

FREDDY SUDDENLY COUGHED AND HURRIED INTO THE LAVATORY. FLOYD TURNED TOWARD THE BUREAU. HIS EYES WIDE WITH HORROR. HE OPENED THE TOP DRAWER AND STARED AT THE STAINED GORILLA PAW.
FREDDY? YOU... YOU REMEMBER YESTERDAY... WHEN I WISHED JOE DIDN'T HAVE A STOMACH. SO HE WOULDN'T BE HUNGRY ANY MORE?


THAT NIGHT, FLOYD PUT THE MUMMIFIED GORILLA PAW IN HIS POCKET AND WENT DOWNTOWN TO THE CURIO SHOP! WHEN HE ENTERED, A DARK, TALL MAN GREETED HIM...
YES, SIR? WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU THIS EVENING?
WHERE...WHERE'S THE OLD MAN? I WANT TO SEE HIM!

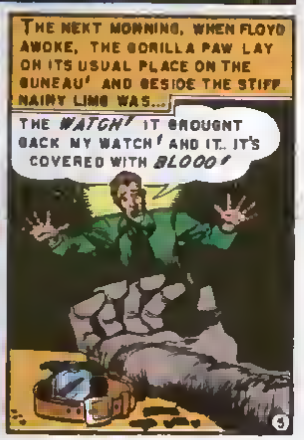

THE TALL DARK ONE'S FACE FELL! HE SHOOK HIS HEAD SADLY...
YOU MEAN THE MAN WHO USED TO OWN THIS SHOP? HE...HE'S DEAD! CHOKED TO DEATH! TWO NIGHTS AGO! SOME PETTY THIEF MURDERED HIM...FOR TWENTY-FIVE DOLLARS!
DID YOU SAY...MURDERED...FOR TWENTY-FIVE DOLLARS?

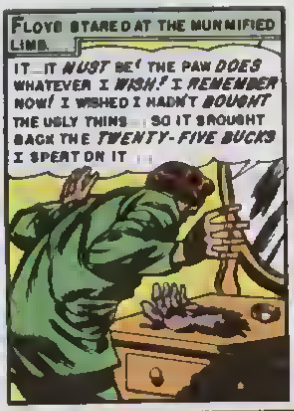

FLOYD WAS TREMBLING AS HE LEFT THE CURIO SHOP! HE MOVED DOWN THE DESERTED STREET, MUSING TO HIMSELF...
THOSE STAINS...ON THE GORILLA PAW! THEY'RE...BLOOD-STAINS! JOE'S BLOOD! THE THING IS...
DON'T MOVE, BUDDY! THIS IS A GUN IN MY HAND!

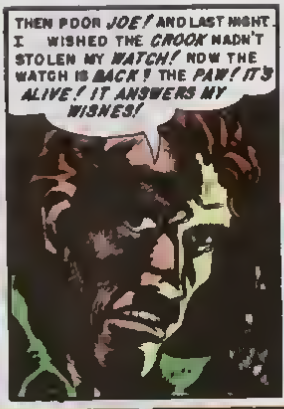

I...I'VE GOT A COUPLE OF BUCKS ON ME, MISTER! YOU CAN HAVE 'EM, ONLY DON'T SHOOT!
HAND OVER THAT WRIST WATCH YOU'RE WEARING! THAT LOOKS LIKE IT'S WORTH SOMETHING!


THE HOLD-UP MAN SNATCHED FLOYD'S WATCH AND THE MONEY, AND FLED.
BLAST IT! I DON'T MIND THE DOUGH, BUT I WISH HE HADN'T TAKEN MY WATCH! I GOOD LORD!

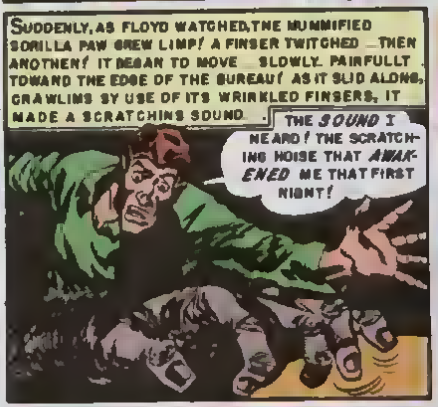

FLOYD REACHED INTO HIS POCKET...
THE GORILLA PAW! IT'S GONE!

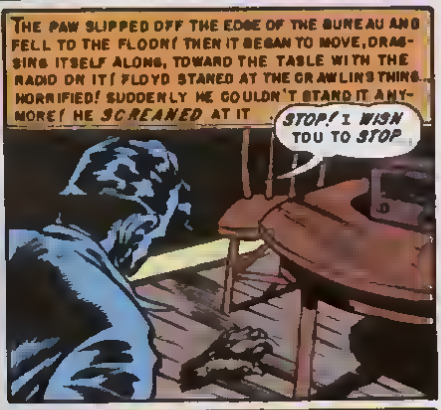

THE NEXT MORNING, WHEN FLOYD AWOKE, THE GORILLA PAW LAY ON ITS USUAL PLACE ON THE BUREAU! AND BESIDE THE STIFF HAIRY LIMB WAS...
THE WATCH! IT BROUGHT BACK MY WATCH! AND IT...IT'S COVERED WITH BLOOD!

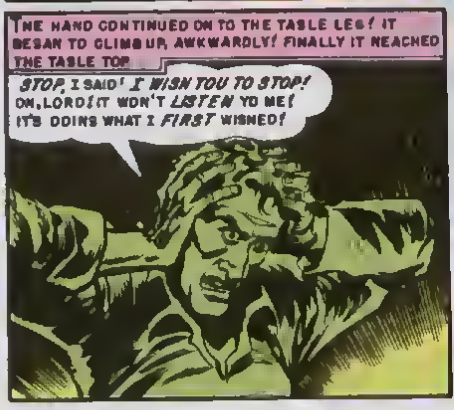

FLOYD STARED AT THE MUMMIFIED LIMB.
IT—IT MUST BE! THE PAW DOES WHATEVER I WISH! I REMEMBER NOW! I WISHED I HADN'T BOUGHT THE UGLY THING—SO IT BROUGHT BACK THE TWENTY-FIVE BUCKS I SPENT ON IT!

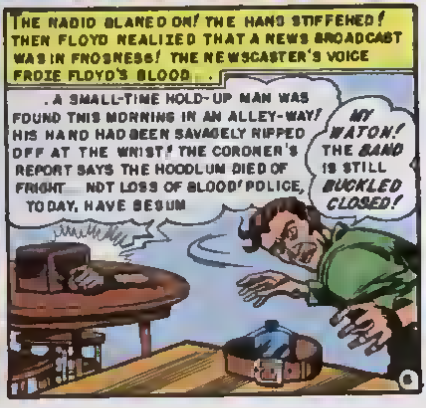

THEN POOR JOE! AND LAST NIGHT. I WISHED THE CROOK HADN'T STOLEN MY WATCH! NOW THE WATCH IS BACK! THE PAW! IT'S ALIVE! IT ANSWERS MY WISHES!


I'VE GOT TO TEST IT . . TO SEE! LEMME THINK! I WISH . . I WISH THAT RADIO WAS TURNED ON . . THAT'S WHAT I WISH!


SUDDENLY, AS FLOYD WATCHED, THE MUMMIFIED GORILLA PAW GREW LIMP! A FINGER TWITCHED—THEN ANOTHER! IT BEGAN TO MOVE—SLOWLY—PAINFULLY TOWARD THE EDGE OF THE BUREAU! AS IT SLID ALONG, CRAWLING BY USE OF ITS WRINKLED FINGERS, IT MADE A SCRATCHING SOUND . .
THE SOUND I HEARD! THE SCRATCHING NOISE THAT AWAKENED ME THAT FIRST NIGHT!


THE PAW SLIPPED OFF THE EDGE OF THE BUREAU AND FELL TO THE FLOOR! THEN IT BEGAN TO MOVE, DRAGGING ITSELF ALONG, TOWARD THE TABLE WITH THE RADIO ON IT! FLOYD STARED AT THE CRAWLING THING—HORRIFIED! SUDDENLY HE COULDN'T STAND IT ANYMORE! HE SCREAMED AT IT . .
STOP! I WISH YOU TO STOP!


THE HAND CONTINUED ON TO THE TABLE LEG! IT BEGAN TO CLIMB UP, AWKWARDLY! FINALLY IT REACHED THE TABLE TOP . .
STOP, I SAID! I WISH YOU TO STOP! OH, LORD! IT WON'T LISTEN TO ME! IT'S DOING WHAT I FIRST WISHED!


THE RADIO BLARED ON! THE HAND STIFFENED! THEN FLOYD REALIZED THAT A NEWS BROADCAST WAS IN PROGRESS! THE NEWSCASTER'S VOICE FROZE FLOYD'S BLOOD . .
. A SMALL-TIME HOLD-UP MAN WAS FOUND THIS MORNING IN AN ALLEY-WAY! HIS HAND HAD BEEN SAVAGELY RIPPED OFF AT THE WRIST! THE CORONER'S REPORT SAYS THE HOODLUM DIED OF FRIGHT—NOT LOSS OF BLOOD! POLICE, TO DAY, HAVE BEGUN
MY WATCH! THE BAND IS STILL BUCKLED CLOSED!

FLOYD RUSHED TO THE PHONE! HE DIALED THE POOLROOM.

LENNIE SPEAK TO EDDIE! QUICK! RELLO EDDIE? THIS IS FLOYD! LISTEN AND LISTEN CAREFULLY...

FLOYD TOLD EDDIE THE WHOLE STORY.

AND THE PAW DOES WHAT-EVER I WISH! WHAT SHOULD I DO, ED? SHOULD I TELL THE COPS? WHAT?

DON'T BE A FOOL, FLOYD! IF IT'S TRUE, YOU'RE SET!

WHY YOU COULD WISH FOR DOUGH... PLENTY OF DOUGH! TEN GRAND! YOU CAN BE RICH! YOU'D BE CRAZY TO GO TO THE COPS!

DEE! YOU'RE RIGHT, EDDIE! I NEVEN THOUGHT OF THAT! I'M A DOPE! I WISH I HAD YOUR BRAINS!

FLOYD HUNG UP AND TURNED TO THE PAW.

GOOD GOD! IT'S GONE AGAIN! WHERE? WHY?

THAT NIGHT, AS FLOYD CURSED HIMSELF FOR LOSING THE PAW, A SCRATCHING SOUND CAME FROM HIS DOOR! HE FLUNG IT OPEN...

IT'S THE GORILLA PAW! IT'S DRAGGING A SACK! WHAT IN THE WORLD COULD IT BE?

FLOYD BENT AND OPENED THE SACK! HE PEERED IN! A VIOLENT NAUSEA SWEPT OVER HIM.

OUGH! IT...IT LOOKS LIKE BRAINS!

AAAAAAAH!

SUDDENLY, FLOYD FELT THE GORILLA PAW SPRING TO HIS BACK. AND WORK ITS WAY UP TO HIS NECK! THE LAST THING FLOYD REMEMBERED BE-FORE EVENYTHING WENT BLACK, WAS THE EXCRUCIAT-ING PAIN IN HIS HEAD...AS THOUGH HIS SKULL WERE BEING CRUSHED...

THE END

HEH, HEH! YEP! FLOYD GOT HIS LAST WISH, TOO! HE DID END UP WITH EDDIE'S BRAINS! NOT THAT THEY COULD DO HIM MUCH GOOD! WELL, IT JUST SHOWS YOU! YOU SHOULDN'T BLOW YOUR TOP OVER A GOOD THING! OH, BY THE WAY! KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR THAT GORILLA PAW! WHEN YOU FIND IT, YOU'LL WISH YOU HADN'T! AND DON'T FORGET TO ORDER YOUR BACK ISSUES! THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE HAS ALL THE INFO! BYE NOW! WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAG, TALES FROM THE CRYPT!



YOU SAY IT'S A 45-MINUTE BUS TRIP, WITH A TRANSFER TO THE COMIC BOOK SHOP? YOU SAY IT'S A HARROWING 30-MINUTE DRIVE ON THE EXPRESSWAY TO THE MALL, AND THEN A 30-MINUTE MERRY-GO-ROUND RIDE TO FIND A PARKING PLACE? YOU SAY YOUR TOWN DOESN T EVEN **HAVE** A COMIC BOOK SHOP OR BOOKSTORE? IS THAT WHAT'S TROUBLING YOU, BUNKY? WELL, THEN, YOU SHOULD

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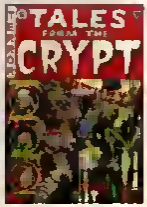
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GLAD CRYPT #1



GLAD CRYPT #2



GLAD CRYPT #3



GLAD CRYPT #4



GLAD CRYPT #5



GLAD CRYPT #6



GLAD VAULT #1



GLAD VAULT #2



GLAD VAULT #3



GLAD VAULT #4



GLAD VAULT #5



GLAD VAULT #6



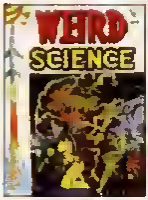
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GLAD WEIRD #3



GLAD WEIRD #4



GLAD HAUNT #1



GLAD HAUNT #2

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GLAD VAULT

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GLAD WEIRD SCIENCE

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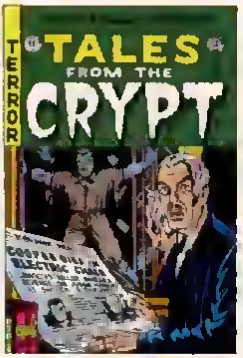
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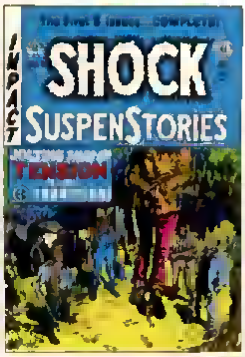
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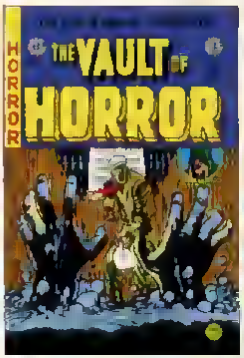
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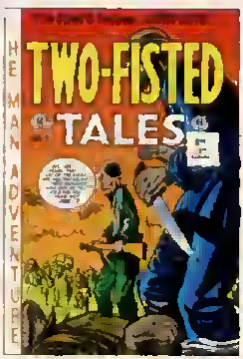






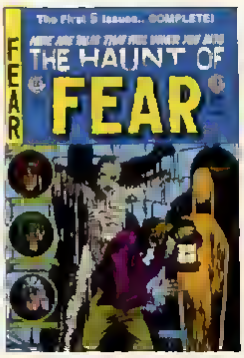
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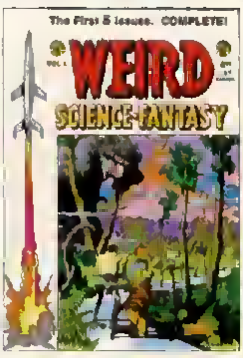


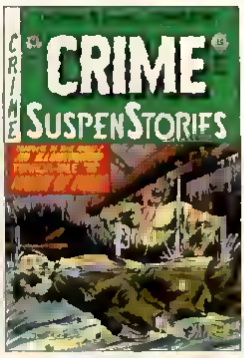




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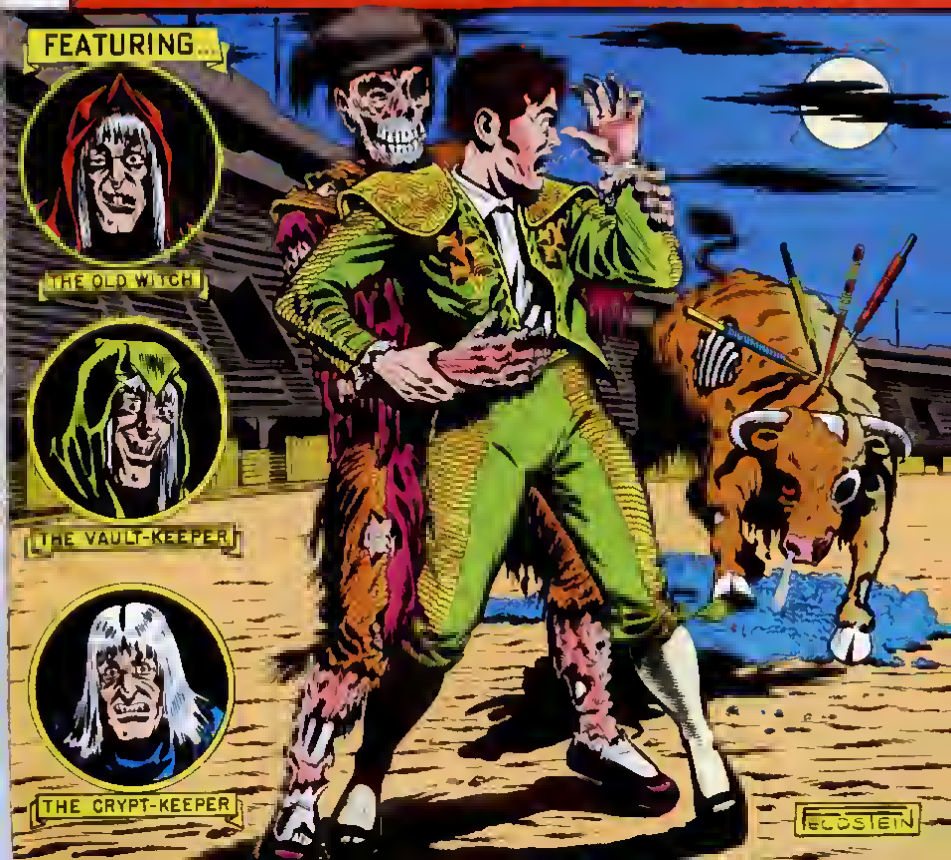
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CRYPT #4



CRYPT #5



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W SCI #3



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SHOCK #4



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THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! YEP! IT'S ME *THE OLD WITCH* MISTRESS OF *THE HAUNT OF FEAR!* WELL, THE FIRE BENEATH MY *CAULDRON* IS LEAPING AND CRACKLING! THE *EVIL BREW* IS BUBBLING AND STEAMING! SO COME IN... AND I'LL DISH OUT ANOTHER OF MY *TASTY TALES OF TERROR!* THIS TIME MY STORY CONCERNS ITSELF WITH THE *BURIAL INDUSTRY!* AS ALL OF YOU FIENDISH FANS KNOW, I'M A *HARD-HEARTED* GAL! BUT WHAT'S GOIRS ON TODAY *EVEN SICKENS ME!* OH, *SURE* THERE *ARE* HONEST FUNERAL DIRECTORS AND CEMETERY OPERATORS! HOWEVER THERE ARE *FAR TOO MANY* OF THE TYPE *THIS* LITTLE EPIC DEALS WITH! READY FOR IT? GOOD! THEN I'LL BEGIN THE YARN I CALL

GRAVE BUSINESS!



EZRA COOPER, THE SENIOR PARTNER OF *COOPER AND MITCHEL UNDERTAKERS,* STANDS BEFORE THE PAINT-CRACKED DOOR AND WAITS FOR HIS LATEST 'CLIENT' TO OPEN IT! HEAVY FOOTSTEPS APPROACH, THE DOOR SWINGS INWARD, AND A WRINKLED WHITE-HAIRED OLD WOMAN PEERS OUT! SHE STUDIES EZRA WITH RED-RIMMED EYES SWOLLEN FROM CRYING

YES?

MY *DEEPEST* SYMPATHIES, MRS MARTIN! I'M MR. COOPER, THE FUNERAL DIRECTOR!


THE OLD LADY NODS AND STEPS ASIDE! EZRA ENTERS THE GLOOMY INTERIOR OF THE TENEMENT FLAT! HE LOOKS ABOUT AND RETCHES IN SILENT REVULSION...
FILTHY PLACE! THE OLD RAT PROBABLY HASN'T GOT A DIME! UGH! OH, WELL! IT'S A LIVING!
MY HUSBAND! HE DIED... SOB... EARLY THIS MORNING! I.. I...
EZRA SITS DOWN GINGERLY ON A WORN, MOTH-EATEN CHAIR! HE FOLDS HIS HANDS IN HIS LAP SO AS NOT TO TOUCH THE DUST-COVERED ARMS AND SMILES SWEETLY AT THE SORROW-CHOKED OLD WOMAN
I UNDERSTAND, MRS MARTIN! YOU'D LIKE TO MAKE... EH... ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOUR DEAR DEPARTED HUSBAND'S BURIAL!
I...I CAN'T AFFORD MUCH, MR COOPER! YOU SEE, HENRY DIDN'T LEAVE ME MUCH! I HAVE ABOUT FOUR HUNDRED DOLLARS SAVED!
EZRA RUBS HIS CHIN PENSIVELY..
MM-M-M-M! FOUR HUNDRED! THAT'S NOT VERY MUCH! OF COURSE, YOU'LL HAVE SOMETHING TO LIVE ON, WON'T YOU, MRS MARTIN? AN... INSURANCE POLICY?
OH, YES! HENRY HAD A LIFE INSURANCE POLICY! HE WANTED TO LEAVE ME PROVIDED FOR!
FUNNY! HE JUST SENT THEM A PREMIUM PAYMENT LAST WEEK! IT'S FOR A THOUSAND DOLLARS! THAT OUGHT TO BE PLENTY FOR ME...FOR A LITTLE WHILE, AT...
A THOUSAND DOLLARS! THAT WAS THOUGHTFUL OF HIM, WASN'T IT? YOUR HUSBAND WAS A GOOD MAN, WASN'T HE?
OH, VERY GOOD! WHILE HE WAS ABLE, HE TOOK GOOD CARE OF ME! YES, HENRY WAS A GOOD MAN... SOB...
THEN YOU'LL WANT TO GIVE HIM A NICE FUNERAL! NOT SOMETHING CHEAP AND ORDINARY! SOMETHING BEFITTING SUCH DEVOTION!
WELL, I...
NOW, FOR EXAMPLE, OUR FOUR HUNDRED DOLLAR FUNERAL INCLUDES THE PLOT.. A SIMPLE WOODEN COFFIN.. A HEARSE.. AND ONE CAR! BUT FOR JUST A LITTLE EXTRA, YOUR DEAR DEPARTED HUSBAND WILL BE LAID TO REST IN A SATIN-LINED, SOLID BRONZE CASKET! AND A FLORAL CAR.. YOU'LL WANT THAT! AND THE PLOT... IT REALLY SHOULD BE LANDSCAPED...
BUT ALL THAT SOUNDS SO EXPENSIVE!
DON'T YOU WORRY, MRS. MARTIN! JUST LET ME HANDLE IT! I'LL MAKE SURE YOUR DEAR HUSBAND GETS THE KIND OF FUNERAL YOU'D WANT HIM TO HAVE! AND THE PRICE... WELL, WE'LL MAKE SURE YOU WON'T HAVE TO PAY MORE THAN YOU CAN AFFORD!
2


SEVERAL DAYS LATEN, AFTER HENRY MARTIN'S FUNERAL...
WHY, IT'S YOU, MR. COOPER! COME IN! COME IN! I HAVEN'T HAD A CHANGE TO THANK YOU! HENRY'S FUNERAL WAS LOVELY!
I'M GLAD YOU LIKED IT, MRS. MARTIN! I'VE COME WITH MY BILL!
LET'S SEE! THE SOLID BRONZE CASKET WITH THE SATIN-TAILORED INTERIOR WAS $490! THE PLOT... $350! A HEARSE AND ONE CAR...$50! FOUR PALL BEARERS...$60! WHITE GLOVES FOR PALL BEARERS...$30! BOUTONNIERS FOR PALL BEARERS...$20! EMBALMING...$100! MANICURE...$10! FLORAL CAR AND FLOWERS...$100! NEWSPAPER NOTICES...$10 AND FUNERAL DIRECTION...$60!
THAT TOTALS... ER... $1380! TO THE PENNY!
$1380! BUT I TOLD YOU, MR. COOPER! I ONLY HAVE $400 SAVED!
AH, DON'T BE ALARMED, MRS. MARTIN! YOUR HUSBAND'S INSURANCE POLICY... ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS! REMEMBER?
NO! YOU CAN'T! YOU WOULDN'T TAKE THAT! THAT'S ALL I HAVE!
I'M AWFULLY SORRY, MRS. MARTIN! THE FUNERAL IS OVER! YOUR HUSBAND IS BURIED! YOU OWE ME $1380, AND YOU SIMPLY MUST PAY IT! GOOD-DAY!
SOB... SOB...
LATER, AT THE OFFICES OF COOPER AND MITCHEL UNDERTAKERS, CHARLIE MITCHEL, EZRA'S JUNIOR PARTNER REPORTS...
THE MARTIN FUNERAL NETTED US A COOL $1038 PROFIT, EZRA! THE CASKET COST US $32! THE FLOWERS FOR THE FLORAL CAR... $50! THE BOUTONNIERS... $10! THE NEWSPAPER NOTICES, $10 WE COULDN'T FOOL AROUND WITH THAT... AND THE PLOT $240!
THE CARS ARE OURS! THE GLOVES GO BACK IN THE DRAWER! TOTAL COST... $342! HEH, HEH!
QUITE A LUCRATIVE BUSINESS, EH, CHARLIE!
OH, BY THE WAY! THE CITY'S GOT ANOTHER UNIDENTIFIED CORPSE FOR US TO BURY! WHAT'LL WE CHARGE?


CHARGE 'EM THE USUAL $75 FOR EMBALMING AND $300 FOR THE PLOT! SINCE 'UNIDENTIFIEDS' GO IN UNMARKED GRAVES, WE CAN PUT HIM IN OLD MAN MARTIN'S PLOT...HALF-WAY DOWN...AND THE CITY'LL NEVER BE THE WISEN! THAT'LL SAVE US THE COST OF A PLOT! GIVE HIM ONE OF OUR $10 PLAIN PINE COFFINS AND CHARGE $50 FOR IT!
OKAY, EZRA!
WELL, I HAVE TO BE GOING, CHARLIE! TOMORROW'S THE CONVENTION OF FUNERAL DIRECTORS AND CEMETERY OPERATORS! TAKE GOOD CARE OF THINGS WHILE I'M GONE!
SURE! NOW, DRIVE CAREFULLY, EZRA!
HEH, HEH! WORRIED ABOUT ME, CHARLIE? I DON'T KNOW WHY! IF I WERE KILLED, THE BUSINESS WOULD BE YOURS! ALL YOU'D HAVE TO DO IS BUY OUT MY SHARE FROM MY ESTATE!
OH, CUT IT OUT, EZRA! I DON'T LIKE THAT KIND OF TALK!
THE NEXT DAY, AT THE BURIAL INDUSTRY'S COMBINED CONVENTION...
EZRA COOPER! YOU OLD SON-OF-A-GUN! HOW ARE YOU? HOW'S BUSINESS, EZ?
PRETTY DEAD, PHIL! HAW-HAW!
THERE IS MUCH LAUGHING AND JOKING BY THE MEMBERS OF THIS MORBID INDUSTRY...
$100 FOR EMBALMING! HEH, HEH! THAT'S WHAT I CHARGE! WHY I COULD EMBALM A HIPPOPOTAMUS FOR A BUCK AND A HALF!
MANY 'HUMOROUS STORIES' ARE SWAPPED...
SO WE SELL 'EM THIS FOUR-GRAVE PLOT FOR $700, SEE! ONLY THE PLOT'S JUST LARGE ENOUGH FOR THREE-AND-A-HALF COFFINS! WHEN THE FOURTH ONE COMES ALONG, WE HOLD UP THE FUNERAL UNTIL THEY COME ACROSS WITH ANOTHER $200!
LORD, WALTER! THAT'S A RIOT!
SO THIS WIDOW DIDN'T WANT TO PAY THE BILL! SO WHAT DID I DO? I HAD THE BODY... SO I HELD IT... WITHOUT BURYING IT...AS SECURITY! SHE PAID! AND QUICK, TOO!
THAT TOOK NERVE, DONALD!
PRETTY STIFF SECURITY, I'D SAY! HAW! HAW!


FIRALLY, THE CORVERTIOR IS OVER, AND EZRA BESINS HIS TRIP HOME...
HEH, HEH! I SURE LIKE THOSE GET-TOGETHERS! ALWAYS LEARN SOME NEW ORES.
SUDDERLY, WHILE EZRA STREAKS ALONG A LORELY STRETCH OF HIGHWAY, THERE IS A LOUD EXPLOSION AS HIS RIGHT FRORT TIRE BLOWS OUT.
GOOD LORD!
THE CAR CAREERS CRAZILY ACROSS THE CORCRETE ROAD, SPINS SHARPLY, ARD TURNS OVER INTO A DITCH..
WHEN EZRA COMES TO, HE IS STARING UP AT A STARRY SKY! HE TRIES TO MOVE...TO GET UP! NOTHING HAPPENS...
I REMEMBER NOW! THE BLOW-OUT! I MUST HAVE CRASHED!
EZRA TRIES TO CRY OUT...BUT CAN MAKE NO SOUND! HE BEGINS TO CONCENTRATE! HE CAN FEEL NOTHING, NOT EVEN HIS ARMS OR HIS LEGS! FOR A MOMENT HE HAS THE HORRIBLE FEAR THAT THEY ARE GONE...
I..I CAN'T MOVE! I CAN'T EVEN BLINK MY EYES! I.. I'M PARALYZED!
THEN EZRA HEARS VOICES! TWO GHASTILY-DRESSED TRAMPS MOVE INTO HIS LINE OF VISION...
POOR GUY! HE'S DONE FOR!
HO! HO! I'M ALIVE! LOOK AT ME! LOOK CLOSELY!
HEY! MAYBE HE'S GOT SOME DOUGH ON 'IM!
TAKE IT! IT'S IN MY WALLET! TAKE IT ALL...ONLY HELP ME! I'M ALIVE, I TELL YOU! ALIVE!
THIRTY BUCKS! NOT BAD!
C'MON! LET'S GO! THIS GIVES ME THE CREEPS!
5


THE TWO MEN MOVE OUT OF EZRA'S VIEW, AND HE CAN HEAR THEM CRUNCHING OFF DOWN THE ROAD! HE LAYS THERE .FEELING NO PAIN STARING UP AT THE NIGHT SKY
I CAN'T EVER SHIFT MY EYES! I HAVE NO CONTROL OF MY MUSCLES! EVERY BIT OF ME IS PARALYZED!
EZRA BEGINS TO WONDER IF HE IS BLEEDING! PERHAPS HE IS BLEEDING TO DEATH! HOURS LATER, HE HEARS A FAR-OFF WAIL! IT DRAWS CLOSER AND CLOSER. A SIREN...
OH, THANK GOD! THANK GOD! AN AMBULANCE.. AT LAST!
HEY! THOSE TRAMPS WERE RIGHT! THERE IT IS! WOW! WHAT A MESS!
THE STATE TROOPERS MOVE INTO VIEW! THEY EDGE TOWARD EZRA! IF ONLY THERE WERE SOME WAY HE COULD TELL THEM... LET THEM KNOW! ONE OF THEM BENDS OVER HIM...
SHALL I CALL IN FOR AN AMBULANCE, EDDIE?
NEVER MIND, BERT! BETTER SEND FOR THE MORGUE-WAGON! THIS GUY IS DEAD!
NO! NO! I'M NOT DEAD! I'M ALIVE! I CAN'T MOVE.. BUT, I'M ALIVE! LOOK CLOSELY! EXAMINE ME! PLEASE... PLEASE... OH, GOD...
THIS IS BAKER... CAR SIX! WE'RE ON HIGHWAY TWENTY-TWO SIX MILES EAST OF TOWN! SEND THE MEAT-WAGON! THERE'S BEEN AN ACCIDENT! GUY GOT HIMSELF KILLED!
LOOK HERE, BERT! THE GUY'S WALLET! THOSE TRAMPS MUST HAVE RIFLED IT! THERE'S NOT A DIME IN IT!
WHO WAS HE? WHERE'D HE COME FROM?
NAME'S EZRA COOPER! HEY! GET THIS! HE'S AN UNDERTAKER! SAYS HERE IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, NOTIFY CHARLES MITCHEL HIS PARTNER...
WELL! THAT'LL SAVE THE BOYS AT THE MORGUE SOME WORK!
AFTER WHAT SEEMS LIKE HOURS TO EZRA, HE HEARS ANOTHER CAR PULL UP! THE MORGUE-WAGON! THEN HIS VIEW OF THE NIGHT SKY IS BLOTTED OUT BY A CURTAIN OF WHITE...
THEY'RE COVERING ME WITH A SHEET! PLEASE... I'M NOT DEAD! I'M NOT!
OKAY, BOYS! HE'S ALL YOURS!


ANOTHER INTERMINABLE LENGTH OF TIME PASSES! EZRA HEARS THE SOUND OF A MOTOR AND KNOWS HE IS BEING DRIVEN INTO TOWN — TO THE MORGUE! THEN THE 'CLACK-CLACK' OF WHEELS! THEY'RE WHEELING HIM IN...
GET IN TOUCH WITH THIS GUY MITCHEL! FIND OUT WHAT HE WANTS TO DO WITH THIS STIFF!
OKAY!
YES! CHARLIE'LL HELP ME! HE'LL SEE I'M NOT DEAD!
SOMEONE IS DIALING A PHONE! THERE ARE VOICES
THAT'S RIGHT! AN AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENT! YOU'LL TAKE CARE OF EVERYTHING? OKAY! BE RIGHT OVER? GOOD! WE WON'T DO ANYTHING TO HIM, THEN! RIGHT! BYE!
MORE TIME PASSES! THEN THE WHITE CURTAIN IS LIFTED AND A BLINDING LIGHT BORES INTO EZRA'S BRAIN! CHARLIE IS STARING DOWN AT HIM
IT'S HIM, ALL RIGHT! HELP ME GET HIM INTO THE HEARSE, HUH, BOYS?
SURE, MR. MITCHEL!
THE WHITE CURTAIN IS REPLACED! MORE 'CLACK-CLACK' AS EZRA IS WHEELED OUT! THEN THE SOUND OF A MOTOR
THANK GOD! CHARLIE IS TAKING ME HOME! HE'LL FIND OUT SOON! I'LL BE SAFE!
AGAIN THE CURTAIN IS REMOVED! CHARLIE IS GRINNING DOWN AT EZRA
WELL, EZRA! YOU WERE RIGHT! THE BUSINESS IS ALL MINE NOW!
CHARLIE? I'M ALIVE! I'M ALIVE!
AND DO YOU KNOW HOW I'M GOING TO PAY YOUR ESTATE FOR YOUR SHARE OF OUR PARTNERSHIP, EZRA?
CHARLIE! DON'T TALK LIKE THAT! I'M NOT DEAD! LOOK AT ME!
I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU THE MOST EXPENSIVE FUNERAL I CAN PHONY UP, EZRA! IT'S GOING TO COST ME PEANUTS, BUT YOUR ESTATE WILL PAY THROUGH THE NOSE!
CHARLIE! PLEASE! OH, LORD, LORD..


CHARLIE LEERS DOWN AT EZRA'S RIGHT FACE..
AND THE FIRST THING I'M GOING TO DO IS FORGET TO EMBALM YOU! AND I'LL CHARGE $200... BECAUSE IT'LL BE A SPECIAL JOB I WON'T DO!
AND YOU'LL GET OUR SPECIAL CASKET... THE ONE WITH THE VELVET-TAILORED INTERIOR AND THE POLISHED BRASS HANDLES! YOU KNOW... THE ONE THAT COSTS US $40! I'LL CHARGE $2,000 FOR IT!
OH, TEE, EZRA! YOU'LL HAVE A LOVELY FUNERAL! WHITE-GLOVED PALL-BEARERS AND ALL! IT MAY RUN ME $400! BUT THE BILL WILL SAY $4,000! HE H. HEH! THAT OUGHT TO BE ENOUGH TO BUY YOU OUT!
EZRA LIES THERE- LISTENING TO CHARLES! HE CANNOT MOVE! HE CANNOT CRY OUT! HE IS HELPLESS! AS HELPLESS AS THE POOR UNFORTUNATES THAT HE ONCE PRATED UPON HIMSELF...
YOU TAUGHT ME EVERYTHING I KNOW, EZRA! YOU TAUGHT ME HOW TO MARK UP GOODS 600%! YOU TAUGHT ME HOW TO THROW IN ALL THE EXTRAS! WELL, NOW YOU'RE GETTING THEM ALL... YOURSELF!
AH, YES! EZRA'S FUNERAL REALLY IS SOMETHING! IT IS THE MOST EXPENSIVE FUNERAL COOPER AND MITCHEL EVER ARRANGED! THE CASKET WITH THE POLISHED BRASS HANDLES AND THE VELVET-LINED INTERIOR IS LOWERED SLOWLY INTO THE GAPING SIX FOOT HOLE! INSIDE, EZRA LIES, STARING UP INTO THE BLACKNESS THAT SURROUNDS HIM. UNABLE TO MOVE... UNABLE TO CRY OUT... HELPLESS
HEE, HEE! TEP! EZRA WAS BURIED ALIVE! A JUST PUNISHMENT, I WOULD SAY! WHAT ABOUT CHARLIE? WHAT'S HIS PUNISHMENT? DON'T WORRY! THEY'LL GET HIM... AT HIS FUNERAL! HEE, HEE! AND NOW I'M GOING TO TURN YOU OVER TO THAT MAUGEATING OLD BUZZARD, THE VAULT-KEEPER! HE'S WAITING WITH HIS HORROR YARN! OH... IF YOU HAVEN'T AS YET ORDERED YOUR BACK ISSUES FROM ME READ MY COLUMN, THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE! SEE YOU LATER!
THE END

THE VAULT OF HORROR!

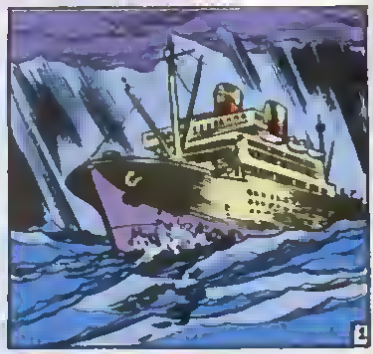


HEH, HEH! WELL, CREEPING CORPSES! IF IT ISN'T TIME FOR ANOTHER GRUESOME TALE FROM MY PRIVATE COLLECTION! I DON'T HAVE TO TELL YOU OF THE PRE-CAUTIONS THAT SHOULD BE TAKEN BEFORE READING ONE OF MY HORRIFYING YARNS . SO WITHOUT FURTHER ADO, I GIVE YOU THE STORY I CALL...

THE VAMP!



HEAVING AND TOSSING, THE HUGE SHIP LABORED UNDER THE POUNDING OF THE BILLOWING, CRASHING WAVES THAT SWEPT ACROSS HER DECKS . YET HELD A SLOW BUT TRUE COURSE FOR ENGLAND...



NESTLED COMFORTABLY IN THEIR CABIN, ARTHUR LAND AND HIS WIFE, OEENA, HAPPILY PORES OVER TRAVEL FOLDERS OF THE EUROPEAN CONTINENT...

ISN'T IT *WONDERFUL*, ARTHUR? IT'S JUST LIKE A SECORD HONEYMOON!

ONE WHOLE MONTH! BOY, ARE WE GOIHA TO HAVE A *TIME!*

SEVERAL DAYS LATER, THEIR SHIP DOCKED IN ERGLAND...

WHY, I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! IT'S NOT FOGGY AT ALL!

HA, HA! NOT *EVERY* DAY IS RAINY AND FOGGY, OEENA! THE SUN SHINES HERE TOO!

DURING THE TWO WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED, ARTHUR AND OEENA LIVED LIFE TO THE HILT— LONDON, PARIS, GENEVA, VIENNA, MILAN, ROME—

AND FINALLY ONE NIGHT, TIRED BUT HAPPY, THEY CHECKED INTO A HOTEL IN BUDAPEST, *HUNGARY!*

OH, I'M JUST *EXHAUSTED!* I'M GOING STRAIGHT TO BED!

NOT ME! I THINK I'LL TAKE A WALK BEFORE I TURN IN!

WELL, IF I'M ASLEEP WHEN YOU GET BACK, DON'T DISTURB ME! I THINK I COULD SLEEP FOR A WEEK!

OKAY, HONEY! PLEASANT DREAMS!

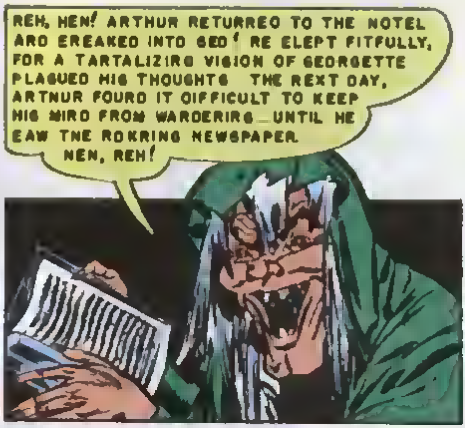
EERIE SHADOWS FALL ACROSS THE STREETS, AS ARTHUR WALKED THROUGH THE CHILLY, DAMP HUNGARIAN NIGHT..

I'VE COME A LONG WAY.. BEEN WALKING LONGER THAN I THOUGHT

..GUESS I'D BETTER START BACK TO THE HOTEL! MAYBE OEENA'S.. SAY! WHAT'S THAT NOISE? SOUNDS LIKE SOMEONE RUNNING THIS WAY!


A GIRL!
HELP! OH, HELP PLEASE! A DEAD MAN DOWN THERE!
A DEAD MAN? WE BETTER CALL THE POLICE!
NO! THEY WILL BE HERE SOON ENOUGH! IF YOU OR I ARE FOUND HERE, WE WILL BE IN GREAT TROUBLE! WE MUST LEAVE!
BUT.. BUT WHY? WE HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING! AT LEAST
THERE HAVE BEEN A SERIES OF MURDERS OF LATE! THE POLICE HAVE REACHED THE POINT WHERE THEY WILL PROSECUTE ANYONE!
LISTEN! POLICE SIRENS!
YOU SEE? OH, PLEASE! YOU MUST BELIEVE AND TRUST ME! QUICKLY! THIS WAY!
ARTHUR HUMOLT FOLLOWED THE RAVISHING, DARK-HAIRED BEAUTY THROUGH NUMEROUS STREETS AND ALLEYS UNTIL FINALLY...
WE ARE SAFE NOW! I LIVE NEAR HERE... WILL YOU TAKE ME HOME?
WHY... WHY, YES! I'D BE DELIGHTED TO!
FOR A LONG WHILE THEY STOOD IN THE SHADOWS TALKING QUIETLY... INTIMATELY! ARTHUR'S HEAD REELED WITH THE SMELL OF HER EXOTIC PERFUME, THE CLOSENESS OF THEIR BODIES...
GEORGETTE... IT'S GETTING LATE! I MEAN... I DON'T WANT TO GO, BUT.. MY WIFE..
I KNOW, ARTHUR! ..YOUR WIFE!
YOU'RE... YOU'RE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN I'VE EVER MET! I... I ALMOST WISH THAT I WASN'T MARRIED! I MEAN, YOU SEEM TO CAST A SPELL OVER ME! GEORGETTE
YES, ARTHUR?
3



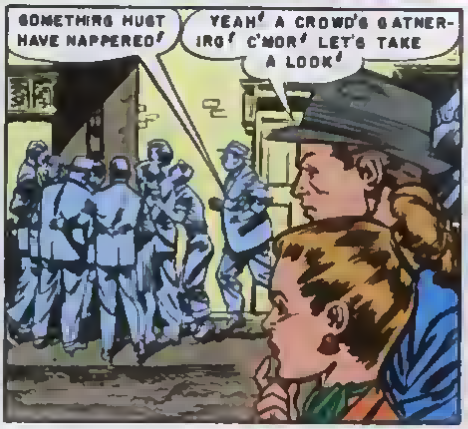






THAT EVENING, ARTHUR AND DEEMA STROLLED ALONG THE AVENUE.





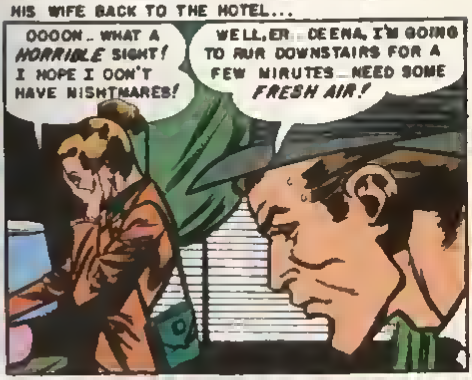
SUBWAY-WISE, ARTHUR AND HIS WIFE EASILY ELBOWED THEIR WAY TO THE FRONT OF THE CROWD. AND STARED DOWN AT THE LIFELESS BODY OF A YOUNG HUNGARIAN GIRL.



APPREHENSIVELY, ARTHUR'S EYES SEARCHED THE FACES OF THE PEOPLE AROUND HIM. A MOMENT PASSED BEFORE HE REALIZED THAT ONE WAS STARING DIRECTLY BACK AT HIM... *GEORGETTE!*



THEY LOOKED AT ONE ANOTHER FOR LONG MINUTES. AND THEN, SUDDENLY, SHE WAS GONE! ARTHUR TOOK HIS WIFE BACK TO THE HOTEL...



A SHORT WHILE LATER ARTHUR WAS IN GEORGETTE'S ARMS...







IT WAS ALMOST DAWN WHEN ARTHUR TIREDLY AND SHAMEFACEDLY ENTERED THE HOTEL ROOM. HIS CONSCIENCE HAD FINALLY WON ITS BATTLE... AND HE WAS READY TO TELL EVERYTHING...



ARTHUR SLUMPED ON THE BED AND TOLD DEENA THE WHOLE, SORDID TRUTH...




THAT NIGHT ARTHUR STROOE THE STREETS TO GEORGETTE'S ROOEE, OEEP IN THOUGHT...
I'LL TELL HIM I CAN'T SEE HIM ANYMORE! I DON'T LOVE HER...IT WAS JUST A VACATION ROMANCE! AN INFATUATION.. HEY! WHAT'S GOING ON AHEAD THERE?
SOMEONE PULLED THAT MAN INTO THE ALLEY! LISTEN TO HIS SCREAMS! I'VE GOT TO HELP HIM!
RACING INTO THE ALLEY, ARTHUR SAW A SINISTER FIGURE BUDDLED OVER THE MAN ON THE GROUND.
HEY, YOU! STOP!
WHA..?
GEORGETTE!
YOU...KILLED HIM! YOU'RE A VAMPIRE! A FILTHY, BLOODTHIRSTY VAMPIRE! I HATE YOU! I DESPISE YOU! YOU DISGUST ME!
NO! ARTHUR, LISTEN TO ME!
LEAVE ME ALONE! GET OUT OF MY WAY! I NEVER WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN!
ARTHUR! COME BACK! I WON'T LET YOU GO! I'LL KILL YOU BEFORE I'LL LET YOU GO BACK TO HER!
WHAP


LATER, ARTHUR BREATHLESSLY ENTERED THE HOTEL ROOM AND HURRIEDLY BEGAN PACKING. HIS WIFE WAS STRANGELY ABSENT...
...NARROW ESCAPE! I'M JUST A DUMB FOOL! WHEN DEENA COMES BACK WE'LL HOP A PLANE...
BUT HOURS PASSED BEFORE DEENA FINALLY RETURNED...
HONEY... I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU!
YES, I KNOW... GEORGETTE SAID YOU WOULD BE!
GEORGETTE? YOU'VE BEEN TO SEE GEORGETTE?
YES! I WENT TO ASK HER TO GIVE YOU UP...BUT WE QUARRELED!
IS THAT WHY YOU LOOK SO..SO PALE? WHAT...WHAT HAPPENED?
WE ARGUED...AND THEN SHE ATTACKED ME! I KNOW SHE BIT ME...
...SEE? HERE? HERE ON THE NECK! I GUESS I PASSED OUT THEN!
ON THE NECK? GOOD LORD! NO WONDER YOU'RE SO PALE! SHE'S DRAINED YOU OF YOUR BLOOD! SHE...SHE'S TURNED YOU INTO A...A...
VAMPIRE!
-THE END-
HEH, HEH, HEH! THAT'S THE KIND OF STORY I LIKE TO TELL...EVERYBODY GETS IT... IN THE NECK! BUT GEORGETTE KEPT HER WORD, DIDN'T SHE? SHE COULDN'T KILL ARTHUR HERSELF...SO SHE FIXED IT SO DEENA WOULD DO THE JOB! WE ALL KNOW THAT A VAMPIRE'S VICTIM BECOMES A VAMPIRE TOO! THAT'S REALLY GETTING NIP OF TWO BATS WITH ONE STONE, EH? WELL... NOW I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO THE OLD WITCH... ANOTHER OLD BAT? YOU'LL FIND HER COLUMN BRIMMING OVER WITH INFO INCLUDING THE METHOD FOR OBTAINING BACK ISSUES FROM YOUR THREE GHOULUNATICS!



THE OLD WITCH'S NICHE

President and CEO—Stephen A. Geppi

Publisher—Russ Cochran

Dear Old Witch

I'm ten years old. I just love your comics, especially "Diminishing Returns!" from HAUNT #8.

1) Have you heard of Ren & Stimpy?
2) Can I have a free comic?
3) Can you make a comic about ghouls?
4) Can you teach me how to draw the Crypt-Keeper?

I would like a pen pal! Your biggest fan,

Jeremy Rainer
6A Lee ST
Forest LK MN 55025

1) No, but I heard FROM them (a postcard at Christmas).

2) We charge about $2 plus shipping for our free comics.

3) I don't do ghouls exclusively (I like to play the field!).

4) Sure. Just put a little Gerital X-tra Strength in a saucer near the Crypt. Draw him out every time.

—OW

Dear Old Witch,

I love your comic books. The Old Witch is the best. I especially enjoyed "Diminishing Returns!" in HAUNT 8. That was awesome when the shrunken head [deleted]. I have one question. Who do you like better, CK or VK?

Michael Mayer
Mansfield OH

I deleted your reminder of just what happened at the end of "Returns," there may be someone who hasn't read it yet!

Between CK and VK, it's a toss up. And I make of your cookies!

—OW

Dear Russ Cochran

I am a very big fan of your comics. I have only one question: What is this "extra-large" CRYPT that I have heard about? Please print my address. I love to get mail from other EC fans.

Brandon Hendrix
POB 117
Broken Bow OK 74728

Way back yonder, when reprinting of these comics as comic books was begun, we did one issue of an Extra-Large size (tabloid-sized, treasury-sized; whatever you call it, it's about 10x13) comic. It reprints both CRYPT 31 (real number: #151) and CRIME 12. What this means in practical terms is, TWO of my HAUNT stories! $6 each plus shipping according to the schedule at the end of this column.

—OW

Dear Old Witch,

I was hungry for some good old-fashioned thrills and chills, but you served up more than I could have imagined in HAUNT #8! "Hounded to Death!" was a fitting start to my "meal." Poor old Steven. I felt bad for him. But I guess we all knew he was dogmeat from the start. Then you let VK tease my palate a bit with his course, "The Very Strange Mummy!" I mean a mummy and a Vampire story all wrapped in one package, what a treat!

Then you came in with the main course. "Diminishing Returns!" I was eager to read the shrunken head story from the moment I laid eyes on the cover. Ooh this was a tasty little dish. Just ask Hagen, he'll tell you! He sure showed Vincent that two heads aren't always better than one.

Thanks OW for a great helping of horror! Please keep them coming...or heads will roll (and Hagen's will lead the pack!!

Jim Davis
Pullman WA

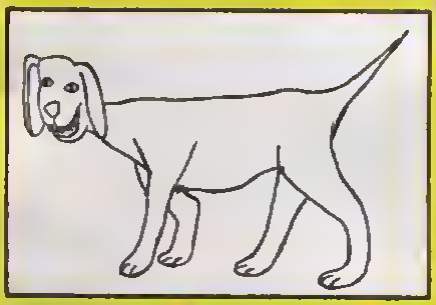
And for dessert, a special "Haunt of Fear" story in the back of CRIME SUSPENSTORIES! A mummy to tickle your tummy and a vampire to tickle your...neck! Yes, heads will roll and stomachs will roll, thus the Rollalds!

—OW

Dear Old Witch,

Your stories are the scariest ones. I collect your comics. I already have HAUNT 8. My favorite is "Hounded to Death!" Keep the picture. Your fan,

Cassie Mootz
Peebles, OH



Remember, you can fill in your collection of any of these scarifying titles! See the section at the end of this column. I like your drawing, but it makes me nervous—why is that dog smiling?!

—OW

Dear Russ

I had planned to take a month off from ordering a volume of the [hardback] EC LIBRARY volumes. But then I noticed from your order form that quite a few more books had sold out and are no longer available. Nothing is worse than having a set that is missing just one book, such as the case with my HAUNT set missing Volume One.

Well, keep up the good work. I look forward to getting my three EC comics at the BIG GUYS COMICS shop every month.

Warren Standifird
Sunnyvale CA

No news is GHOUL news, but the GOOD news is—sets of the hardback HAUNT OF FEAR EC LIBRARY will be back in stock in about six weeks!! These are the complete reprintings in 9x12 books, HAUNT runs to five volumes! The story pages are in b&w, but are as true to the original art pages you may

see stuff we can't possible reproduce in these comic books! My personal lineographer, Ghastly Graham Ingels, benefits mightily from the big, beautiful page size. Watch this space for further info. —OW

Dear Russ,

When are you going to ship your EC albums or 32-page comics to department stores or other places that sell comics? Some people aren't able to buy volumes or sets. Even as cheap as you sell them.

Barry Martin II — address unknown

You've asked a question we GhouLunatics don't know the answer to! But I do know you can buy back issues of these reasonably priced 32-pg comics and subscriptions direct from us by mail! —OW

Dear Russ

I've enclosed another poem. I hope you like it. I've been writing a lot of poetry lately for newspapers and others. It makes me feel wonderful everytime I see one of my poems in print in your magazines ("The Fine Arts" page was a great idea)

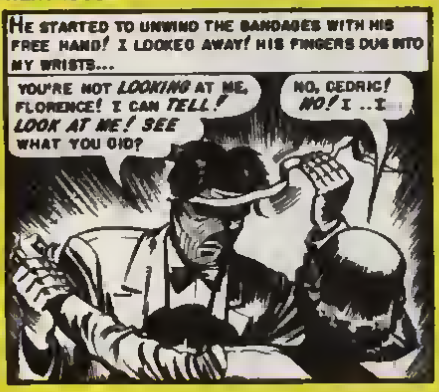
Phyliss The Zombie

Phyliss lived to socialize,
A zombie though she be
With a blank-eyed stare
And a fetid air
She took a shine to me
With a voodoo chant
And a voodoo dance
She boogied all the while
The living dead
With blue lips said,
"I really like her style."
She did the twist
With a broken wrist
And the mashed potato, too.
She fell apart
And it broke my heart
(You lovely zombie, you)

Frank X. Matteson — Lancaster, PA

Like I said above, The Crypt-Keeper gets first crack at the poems and drawings. He runs them in a feature called "The Page of Fine Art," which appears in the SF books, The Suspenstory books and TWO-FISTED TALES. If you're reading only the horror books, you're missing this reader-written material, and plenty good EC stories, too! —OW

NEXT ISSUE

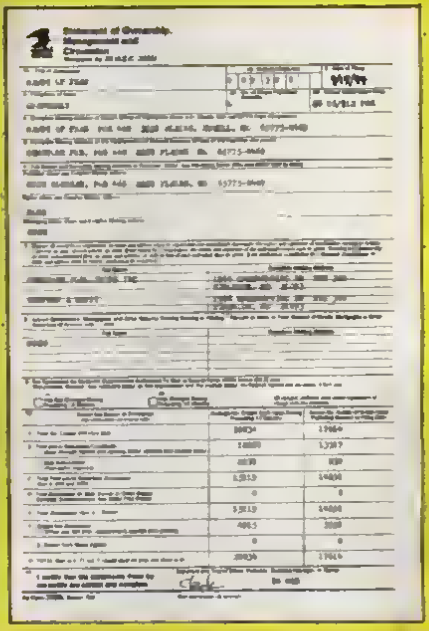


Dear Old Witch,

I've just finished reading GLAD HAUNT #1 and #2. I loved the story "Horror Wa? How'e Bayou?" I also love "Room for One More". I'm going to start my subscription to your disgusting mag soon. Do you have any zombie stories coming up? Ghoulishly yours,

Corey Dollack — W Hartford CT

Don't forget; there were four more 84-pg GLAD HAUNTs! No zombies on the horizon. Just plenty risen corpses, vampires, ironic retributions—normal stuff like that! But, in your honor, I've filched a putrid poem off The Crypt-Keeper's desk, and it features a zombie! See above. —OW


Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation

This month: INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION #10 and CRIME #10. Next month: The 11th issues of CRYPT, WEIRD SCIENCE and SHOCK. Don't forget VAULT, WEIRD FANTASY and TWO-FISTED! Get them at your local comic book shop or SUBSCRIBE (see our ad in this comic for details)!

BACK ISSUES: CRYPT #1, $3 each (subject to availability). All others up thru issue #8, $1.50 each. Issues #4 and up, $2 each. Add $2 per order ($10 outside US) for S&H.

We want letters! Write for:
HAUNT
RUSS COCHRAN
POB 649
WEST PLAINS MO 65775

THIS COMIC REPRINTS
HAUNT OF FEAR #10 (NOV/DEC 1951)

COVER by Al Feldstein	
"Grave Business!"	Graham Ingels
"The Vamp!"	Craig/Davis
"My Uncle Ekar!"	Jack Kamen
"Bum Steer!"	Jack Davis

We welcome letters of individual. We cannot promise to acknowledge publish or answer letters. We edit for clarity, accuracy and length. We automatically address email address and zip code letters you clearly state your wish them published. We attempt to acknowledge publication of letters: to do so we need your address on the individual order.



More items of general EC interest, collected into this special column called...

FAN CLUB NEWS! #9

PRESENTED BY THE VAULT-KEEPER



I just wanted to drop you a little note telling you and all the others you're doing a great job A-OK with me, Captin. I saw the improvement from the very first issue of the 32-page reprints. Good quality color that's nice and clear and it doesn't smudge! Keep up the good work gang!

Feel free to print my address so I can hear from other crazy fans out in this crazy world

Jess Newmann POB 320 W Sand Lk, NY 12196

Dear VK,

I buy every [EC] I can and watch the HBO show whenever possible. I like the comics better than the shows (even though I truly enjoyed "Came The Dawn!" of the cable series. Remember? "Roger is mine! ' Hack! Hack!) Some of your stories were changed and rewritten for the worse. "Maniac at Large" was *trashed*; the ending was the worst. The story's shockending was destroyed—it didn't even let you know that she was in fact the killer. "Lower Berth!" would have been better if it would have followed the comic story more closer. ' Dead Wait!" (which was not a bad story on HBO) was altered so much that there were no similarities in the stories except for the part about the red hair. (Whoop! Goldberg's part was a man's. Vanity's character was never in the original story and the stone s owner was never killed) In ' Werewolf Concerto! '. I didn t understand why the character of the werewolf hunter was introduced and why, at the end, he wasn't a werewolf as the hotel owner in the comic was.

Some changes I liked. In "The Reluctant Vampire," I liked the idea that the vampire was not killed, because he was kindhearted.

Changes. That goes to feed into my question of why some television and movie writers take a work and alter it so much that except for a few minor things, the work does not resemble the original at all—and they still credit the original writer. (e.g. the movies STEVEN KING'S GRAVEYARD SHIFT, STEPHEN KING'S THE LAWNMOWER MAN, LOGAN S RUN, BEYOND THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE, THE HOWLING, etc.)? Don'l they know they can save money by calling it something else and crediting themselves?

Eddie Ray Rosario Hempstead, NY

They save money on the script, and lose money on the lawsuits. This is called, "checks and balances."
—VK

Greetings and salutations! I've been wanting to buy an original EC comic but I've only seen two at $100 each.

These classics are better than any of the comics available today. Here s a list of my picks for the best ECs I've read. Keep in mind that I favor the sci-fi comics, and I haven't read every EC. What are your favorites?

BEST COVERS
3. IMPACT 5 (Davis)
2. SHOCK 3 (Wood)
1. W SCI 1 (Feldstein)

BEST ART IN A SINGLE STORY
3. ' Uppercut!" (Davis/SHOCK 4)
2. Master Race (Krigstein/IMPACT 1)
1. "A Sound of Thunder" (Williamson/W S-F 3)

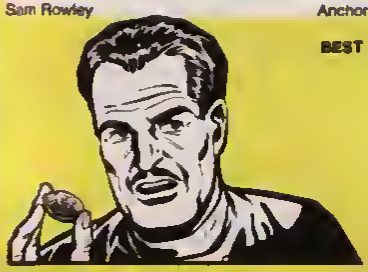
BEST ADAPATIONS
3. Adam Link Series (W S-F)
2. ' Touch And Go!" (CRIME 17)
1. ' A Sound of Thunder! ' (W S-F 3)

BEST SINGLE STORY
3. ' "The Sounds from Another World" (Kurtzman/W SCI 3)
2. "Kill! ' (Kurtzman/2FIST 6)
1. 'Master Race" (Feldstein/IMPACT 1)

BEST OVERALL COMIC
3. 2FIST 17 or SHOCK 2
2. HAUNT 3
1. W S-F 4

BEST PRICE LOOK-ALIKE
"Seeds of Jupiter" (Feldstein/W SCI 8, pg 5)

Sam Rowley Anchorage..AK



HEY, EC FANADDICTS. HORROR FROM THE CRYPT OF FEAR's #3 issue is due out in late January! Vampires, zombies, werewolves, and other ghoulish ghouls have subscribed and now here's your opportunity! Just $8.00 gets you 4 issues of our muck-mag or if your not sure about what our cruddy cauldron has in it send for just one issue for 2 terrible dollars! Don't delay! Issues 1 & 2 have sold out quicker than a vampire can sink his teeth in your mother-in-law (not quick enough eh??)!! Send de check mon to: Sam Kingston's HORROR FROM THE CRYPT OF FEAR. 30 Ivy Drive. Midvale. Utah 84047

Hi! Wanted to write for a long time, but was afraid I wouldn t think of something to top what you already printed from me. Re: release of bios of artists—put in different photos.

Concerning "Tomb's Day!", wasn't that originally published when DICK TRACY had the character Sphynx? Please print my full name and address.

John Cocca 40 Alden AV
W Islip NY 11795

See "Tombs-Day!" in 64-pg RCP VAULT #5—that issue of VAULT (#35) was released in late 93/early 94. You Tracy-heads tell ME!
—VK

Write to this department like so: FAN CLUB NEWS, RUSS COCHRAN, POB 469, WEST PLAINS, MO 65775.

We welcome letters of comment. We cannot promise to acknowledge, publish or answer letters. We edit for clarity, accuracy and length. We automatically withhold street address and zip code unless you clearly state you wish them published. We attempt to acknowledge publication of letters. To do so we need your address on the individual note.

The brat insists, 'I wont to MURDER people just like...

MY UNCLE EKAR!'

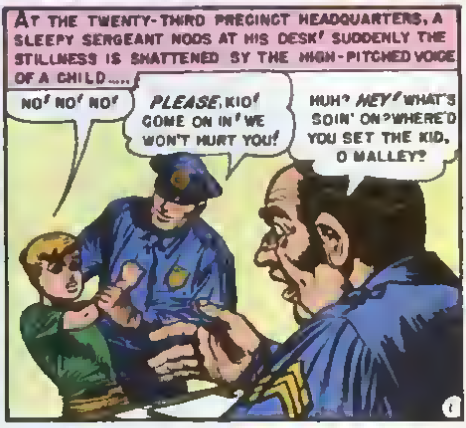




NIGHT SLANKETS THE CITY! THESE ARE THE HOUNS WHEN PEOPLE SLEEP IN THEIR SEDS BEHIND DRAWN BLINDS...AND THINSS OF EVIL CRAWL FROM SENEATH THEIN HIDING PLACES AND ROAM DESENTED HOUSES AND EMPTY ALLEYS! THESE ARE THE HOURS WHEN SOME UNFORTUNATES MEET VIOLENT DEATHS..



AT THE TWENTY-THIRD PRECINCT HEADQUARTERS, A SLEEPY SERGEANT NODS AT HIS DESK! SUDDENLY THE STILLNESS IS SHATTENED SY THE HIGH-PITCHED VOICE OF A CHILD....

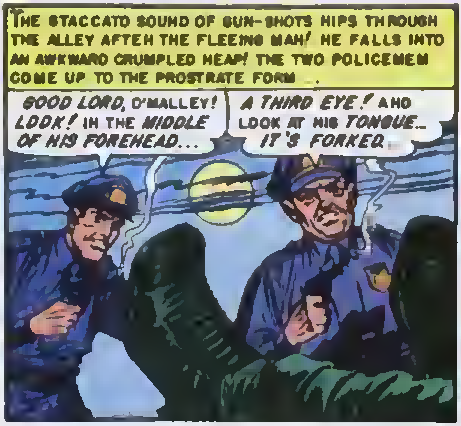


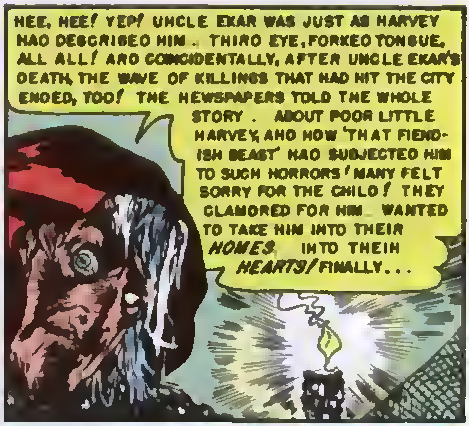

A SMALL WIDE-EYED YOUNGSTER IS LED INTO THE PRECINCT HEADQUARTERS BY A GRIM-FACED OFFICER...
ME AND REILLY WERE CRUISIN DOWN NEAR THE WORST SECTION OF TOWN, WHEN WE SPOTTED HIM!
AT TWO-THIRTY IN THE MORNIN'?
MAYBE YOU CAN DO SOMETHIN' WITH HIM SARGE! WE COULDN'T!
RUN DOWN TO THE FREEZER O'NALLEY! BRING UP A... YOU KNOW!
AFTER OFFICER O'MALLEY LEAVES, THERE IS AN AWKWARD MOMENT OF SILENCE... AND THEN
WHAT'S YOUR NAME, KID?
HARVEY!
HARVEY WHAT?
JUST HARVEY!
BLASTED BRATS! THEY'RE NEVER ANY HELP AT ALL...
NO PLACE!
WHERE DO YOU LIVE, HARVEY?
HEH, HEH! YOU MEAN YOU JUST WALK AROUND THE STREETS, DAY AND NIGHT, WITH NO HOME TO GO TO, EH?
UH-HUH! THAT'S RIGHT!
OH, OH! LOOKS LIKE THIS ONE'S GONNA BE TOUGH!
I WATCH PEOPLE GET MURDERED!
WELL, WHAT DO YOU DO ALL NIGHT, WANDERING AROUND LIKE THAT?
YOU WHAT?
HERE Y'ARE, SARGE!
OH, BOY! AN ICE-CREAM POP.. FOR ME?
WAIT A MINUTE, O'MALLEY! LISTEN, KID! WHAT DID YOU SAY JUST NOW?
I SAID I WATCH PEOPLE GET MURDERED! NOW CAN I HAVE MY ICE-CREAM POP?
2


OH, LORD! WHY DO I HAVE TO GET THESE THINGS?
YOU WATCH PEOPLE GET MURDERED, KID?
UH-HUH!
YEAH? OKAY! WHEN DID YOU SEE SOMEONE GET MURDERED LAST!
TONIGHT!
TONIGHT? WHERE?
IN THE VACANT LOT ON SPRING STREET AT WABASH!
MAN OR WOMAN?
LET'S SEE! TONIGHT IT WAS A... MAN!
DID YOU SEE WHO DID IT?
OF COUNSE! UNCLE EKAR... I CALL HIM UNCLE... HE DID IT! HE ALWAYS DOES IT! I JUST WATCH!
WHAT DOES YOUR UNCLE EK... WHATEVER IT IS... LOOK LIKE, KID?
HE'S GOT THREE EYES... AND A FORKED TONGUE! HIS THIRD EYE IS RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF HIS FOREHEAD!
WHEW! FOR A MINUTE I THOUGHT THE KID WAS SERIOUS!
BETTER RUN OVER TO SPRING AND WABASH ANYWAY, O'MALLEY!
I AN SERIOUS! THAT'S WHAT UNCLE EKAR LOOKS LIKE! YOU ASKED ME AND I TOLD YOU!
SURE, KID! SURE! SET GOING, O'MALLEY!
YEAH, SARGE! S'LONG! S'LONG, KID!
'BYE, OFFICER! YOU'LL FIND HIM IN THE BUSHES NEAR THE FENCE!
THANKS! WE'LL LOOK!
I SAID SET GOING, O'MALLEY! THAT MEANS NOW!
YOU'RE YELLING, MISTER SERGEANT!
YEAH! WELL... I... H-R-RUMMPH! ER... WHERE DID YOU SAY THIS GUY... YOUR UNCLE EKAR... LIVES?


NO PLACE!
YOU MEAN HE WANDERS AROUND THE STREETS LIKE YOU DO?
UH-HUH! I GO WITH HIM! YOU'RE YELLING AGAIN!
AND HE'S GOT THREE EYES AND A FORKED TONGUE?
UH-HUH!
AH, SHUT UP AND EAT YOUR ICE-CREAM, WHILE I TYPE OUT THIS REPORT!
LOST KIDS' BAH!
SERGEANT BRODY INSERTED A 'LOST CHILD REPORT' INTO HIS TYPEWRITER AND BEGAN TO FILL IT OUT...
TIME... TWO-THIRTY A.M! PLACE... ER... WHERE'D THEY FIND YOU, KID?
SPRING STREET NEAR WABASH!
SPRING, NEAR WABASH! NAME... HARVEY... ER.. WHAT'S YOUR LAST NAME KID?
I TOLD YOU! I DON'T HAVE A LAST NAME!
KID! I HOPE YOU HAVE MY JOB WHEN YOU GROW UP! THAT'S WHAT I HOPE!
OH, NO! I'M NOT GOING TO BE A POLICE-MAN WHEN I GROW UP! I WANT TO BE LIKE UNCLE EXAR!
AND I SUPPOSE YOU WANNA GO 'ROUND MURDERING PEOPLE, TOO!
UH-HUH!
LAST NAME... NOT GIVEN! AGE... HOW OLD ARE YOU, KID?
TWENTY-FOUR!
SARGE! SARGE!
TWENTY-FOUR! WHY, I OUGHT TO...
SARGE! THE KID WAS RIGHT! THERE WAS A STIFF IN THAT LOT! DEAD AS A MACKEREL!
4

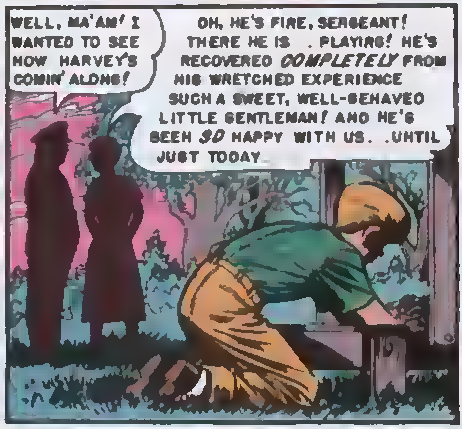

THE TWO POLICEMES STASE AT TSE YOUNGSTES WHO IS JUST LICKING THE LAST TRACE OF CHOCOLATE FSOM THE ICE-CREAM STICK...
HOW'D YOU KNOW ABOUT THIS, KID?
I TOLD YOU! I WATCHED UNCLE EKAR DO IT!
EVES SEE HIM KILL ANYBODY ELSE?
UH-HUH! LAST NIGHT... A LADY... NEAR THE LAKE... IN THE PARK...
HE READ ABOUT THAT IN THE PAPERS, SARGE!
ARE YOU KIDDING? THIS KID CAN'T READ! HE MUST BE SIX.. THE MOST!
I'M TWENTY FOUR! UNCLE EKAR IS ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY!
WHENE CAN WE FIND HIM... THIS UNCLE OF YOURS, KID?
I TOLD YOU! HE'S NOT MY REAL UNCLE! SE SAID HE'D MEET ME... IN THE ALLET... NEAS PRISCE ASD MISH... LATES!
HE SAID..
OKAY, O'MALLEY! TAKE THIS KID OVEN TO THE CHILDREN'S SHELTES ASD HUSRY SIGHT BACK! WE'VE SOT A DATE... WITS UNCLE EKAR!
SARGE! ARE YOU GOING TO SELIEVE THIS KID ABOUT THE THREE EYES AND THE FORKED TONGUE?
O'MALLEY, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SELIEVE! SOW GET GOING!
LATES THAT NIGHT, TWO OFFICERS CSOUCH SEHIND A PILE OF GARBAGE CASS ASD LITTES IN AN ALLEY NEAR PRINCE AND MISH...
I TOLD YOU THE KID WAS ALL WET! LET'S QUIT! I'M SETTIN'..
SHUT UP! LOOK! SOMEOSE'S COMIS' UP THE ALLEY!
HARVEY? THAT YOU?
OKAY, SUDDY! STRETCH!
NO! NO!
HE'S SETTIN' AWAY, O'MALLEY! HEY, YOU! STOP OR WE'LL SHOOT!
3


THE STACCATO SOUND OF GUN-SHOTS RIPS THROUGH THE ALLEY AFTER THE FLEEING MAN! HE FALLS INTO AN AWKWARD CRUMPLED HEAP! THE TWO POLICEMEN COME UP TO THE PROSTRATE FORM ..
GOOD LORD, O'MALLEY! LOOK! IN THE MIDDLE OF HIS FOREHEAD...
A THIRD EYE! AND LOOK AT HIS TONGUE... IT'S FORKED..


HEE, HEE! YEP! UNCLE EKAR WAS JUST AS HARVEY HAD DESCRIBED HIM .. THIRD EYE, FORKED TONGUE, ALL ALL! AND COINCIDENTALLY, AFTER UNCLE EKAR'S DEATH, THE WAVE OF KILLINGS THAT HAD HIT THE CITY ENDED, TOO! THE NEWSPAPERS TOLD THE WHOLE STORY . ABOUT POOR LITTLE HARVEY, AND HOW 'THAT FIENDISH BEAST' HAD SUBJECTED HIM TO SUCH HORRORS! MANY FELT SORRY FOR THE CHILD! THEY CLAMORED FOR HIM.. WANTED TO TAKE HIM INTO THEIR HOMES.. INTO THEIR HEARTS! FINALLY...


HARVEY! THIS IS MR AND MRS. ARNOLD VANDURGHOFF! THESE PEOPLE ARE GOING TO ADOPT YOU! THEY'RE GOING TO TAKE YOU TO THEIR GREAT BIG HOUSE IN THE COUNTRY!
HELLO, HARVEY! YOU CAN CALL ME MOTHER!
YES, MA'AM!


THEY WERE RICH, THE VANDURGHOFFS! THEY DID TAKE HARVEY TO THEIR ESTATE IN THE COUNTRY! HARVEY GOT EVERYTHING HE WANTED ...
HELLO THERE, MRS. VANDURGHOFF!
WHY, SERGEANT BRODY. IT'S SO NICE OF YOU TO CALL!


WELL, MA'AM! I WANTED TO SEE HOW HARVEY'S COMIN' ALONG!
OH, HE'S FINE, SERGEANT! THERE HE IS . PLAYING! HE'S RECOVERED COMPLETELY FROM HIS WRETCHED EXPERIENCE SUCH A SWEET, WELL-BEHAVED LITTLE GENTLEMAN! AND HE'S BEEN SO HAPPY WITH US. .UNTIL JUST TODAY


YOU SEE, HIS DOG DIED LAST NIGHT!
THE END!

THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! GREETINGS, *GHOULS!* I SEE I HAVE *LAST SPOT* AGAIN! WELL, *LAST* BUT NOT *LEAST*, I ALWAYS SAY! YES, IT'S *THE CRYPT-KEEPER*... YOUR HOST IN *THE CRYPT OF TERROR!* OUR STORY THIS TIME IS A FAVORITE OF MINE, ONE THAT I'M SURE WILL *CHILL THE MARROW IN YOUR BONES* AND MAKE THE *HAIR* ON THE BACK OF YOUR NECK *CRAWL!* I CALL THIS *BLOOD-CURDLING* YARN

BUM STEER!





MANUEL RODERO, THE *FARED* MATADOR — THE TOAST OF MADRID — STOOD IN THE SHADOWS AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE BULL-RING, RESPLENDENT IN HIS GOLD-EMBROIDERED SATIN COSTUME! BEYOND, IN THE SUNLIGHT, THE WILDLY CHEERING CROWD HOWLED ITS APPROVAL AS THE PICADORES MOUNTED ON THEIR BLINDFOLDED HORSES, GOADED THE BULL WITH THEIR SHARP GARROCHAS! MANUEL FINGERED THE HANDLE OF HIS SWORD NERVOUSLY ...HIS DAZZLING RED CAPE DRAPED ON HIS ARM...



A BISSAL WAS SIVEN ASD MANUEL SODESO STRODE OUT INTO THE SUNLIGHT! A RESOUNDING OYATION EXPLODED FROM THE SPECTATORS WHEN THEY CAUGHT SIGHT OF HIM! MANUEL WAS THEIS FAVORITE — THE STAS OF THE MADRID SULLFIGHTS! HE CROSSED THE BLOOD-STAINED AMENA AND STOPPED BEFORE A FLAG-DRAPED BOX ...

SEE! HE SALUTES *MARIA CARLO*...HIS *BELOVED!*

HE IS DEDICATING THE *BULL* TO HES — AS HE *ALWAYS* DOES!

AN ATTRACTIVE DARK-EYED SEÑORITA SODDED TO MANUEL. SMILED, AND TOSSED A PERFUMED LACE HANDKESCHIEF TO HIM...

SEE? SHE THROWS SER *HANDKERCHIEF* TO HIM!

SHE DOES THAT *EVERY* TIME HE FIGHTS!

MANUEL CAUGHT THE HANDESCHIEF WITH THE POINT OF HIS SWOSO ASD PSESSED IT TO HIS LIPS — INHALING ITS PESFUMED FRAGRANCE...

THEN HE TUCKED IT INTO HIS BELT AND TURNED TO FACE THE ENRAGED, SNORTING, WOUNDED SULL

SLOWLY — GRACEFULLY — HE UN-FUSLED HIS SCARLET OAPE! THE SULL LOWESED ITS HEAD, PAWING THE SROUNO

AS THE SULL CHASSED, MANUEL DANCED LISHTLY OUT OF ITS WAT. LIFTING HIS CAPE ABOVE THE LETHAL HORNS

SSAVO!

BEAUTIFUL!

PESFECT!

TIME ANO ASAIS THE BULL CHASSED — AND TIME AND ASAIN MANUEL SRACEFULLY SIDE-STEPPED ITS DEATH-DEALING HORNS! BEADS OF PERSPIRATION STOOD OUT ON MANUEL'S FACE LIKE LITTLE DIAMONDS! MANUEL'S HAND SHOOK, AS HE EXTENDED HIS SWORO FOS THE ESTOCADA, THE DEATH SLOW,

LISTEN TO THEM! LISTEN TO THEIR INSANE *SCREAMING!* THEY THINK I'M *BRAVE!* *MARIA* THINKS I'M BRAVE! IF THEY OSLY *KNEW*... HOW *FRIGHTENED* I AM!

E


YES! MANUEL WAS SCARED! SCARED STIFF! OH, SURE. ONCE HE HAD BEEN BRAVE! WHEN HE WAS YOUNG AND COCKY! BUT LATELY HIS NERVE HAD GONE.. VANISHED! MANUEL WAS AFRAID. HE'D BEEN HIDING IT FROM THE CROWD - FROM MARIA! IF THEY EVER FOUND OUT...HE'D BE FINISHED. WASHED UP!
MANUEL DRAPED THE SWORD WITH HIS RED CLOAK AND KNELT AS THE BULL TURNED FOR A FINAL CHARGE. THIS WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF HIS PERFORMANCE
MY HAND IS SHAKING. I CANNOT HOLD MY SWORD STILL.
THE BULL TORE ACROSS THE RING AT MANUEL! HE WATCHED IT WITH WIDE EYES.. HIS PULSE POUNDING! SUDDENLY... FEAR CLUTCHED AT HIS HEART! THE SWORD SLIPPED FROM HIS HAND
LOOK! RODERO'S LOST HIS NERVE!
HE DROPPED HIS SWORD!
BOOOOO
FOR A MOMENT MANUEL HESITATED! THERE WAS STILL TIME TO RECOVER HIS SWORD AND REDEEM HIMSELF IN THE EYES OF THE JEERING CROWD! BUT ONE LOOK AT THE BULL... HURTLING AT HIM... ITS RED EYES BURNING... ITS HORNS MENACING... WAS ENOUGH...
HE'S RUNNING!
HE'S SCARED!
RODERO IS FINISHED!
IN THE SAFETY OF THE ENCLOSURE BENEATH THE GRANDSTAND, MANUEL RODERO FELL TO HIS KNEES, SOBBING! OUTSIDE, THE CROWD HOOTED AND YELLED, DEMANDING THE SHOW FOR WHICH THEY HAD PAID THEIR ADMISSIONS...
MANUEL! WHAT HAPPENED?
I DON'T KNOW! I I DON'T KNOW!
WHERE IS THE NOVICE..THE YOUNG ONE... ARTURO ELZAR? SEND HIM OUT IMMEDIATELY!
A YOUNG PROMISING MATADOR... ARTURO ELZAR... WAS DISPATCHED INTO THE RING AS A SUBSTITUTE TO QUIET THE SHOUTING AUDIENCE! A MOVEMENT NEAR MANUEL MADE HIM TURN! MARIA STOOD BEFORE HIM... STARING DOWN AT HIM... A LOOK OF SCORN ON HER FACE...
MARIA! I...I'M SORRY! I...I'M GETTING OLD! I... COULDN'T...
MY HANDKERCHIEF, MANUEL! I WANT MY HANDKERCHIEF!
MARIA BENT AND SNATCHED HER PERFUMED HANDKERCHIEF FROM MANUEL'S BELT! THEN SHE TURNED AND LEFT! OUTSIDE, THE CROWD CHEERED AS ARTURO ELZAN GRACEFULLY SIDE-STEPPED THE BULL'S MURDEROUS CHARGE
MARIA! MARIA! SOB... SOB...
LISTEN TO THEM OUT THERE! THEY'RE CHEERING! THEY LIKE THE NOVICE, ARTURO ELZAR!
3

AGAIN AND AGAIN, THE YOUNG MATADOR DANCED AWAY FROM THE ONRUSHING BULL! WITH EACH PASS, THE CROWD SENT UP A THUNDEROUS ROAR! FINALLY, THE ESPADA WAS DELIVERED AND THE TORTURED BULL FELL DEAD! ARTURO TURNED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE WILD CHEERS OF THE CROWD...

BRAVO! EXCELLENT! MADRID HAS A NEW STAR MATADOR!

ARTURO STRODE ACROSS THE RING TO THE FLAG-DRAPED BOX OF MARIA CARLO! HE BOWED, SMILING AT HER! SHE SMILED BACK! THEN SHE STOOD UP AND TOSSED HER PERFUMED HANDKERCHIEF TO HIM! THE CROWD WENT WILD! THE DIN WAS DEAFENING...

IN THE SHADOWS OF THE ENCLOSURE BELOW THE GRANDSTAND, MANUEL RODERO WATCHED! HE CURSED... ANGRILY...

SHE'S *THROUGH* WITH ME... AND SHE'S LETTING ALL OF MADRID *KNOW* IT! SHE WANTS THAT *BOY*... THAT *ELZAR*!

THAT NIGHT, MANUEL WENT TO MARIA CARLO'S HOUSE! HE WANTED TO BEG HER FORGIVENESS! HE WANTED TO TELL HER HE WOULD GO INTO THE BULL-RING AGAIN... TO REASSURE HER OF HIS BRAVERY! BUT WHEN HE ARRIVED, HE SAW... THROUGH THE LATTICE WINDOW...

MARIA ...AND *ARTURO*!

HATE AND JEALOUSY SURGED UP IN MANUEL'S BRAIN! HE TURNED FROM THE LOVERS, SWEARING...

I'VE GOT TO GET *RID* OF HIM! MARIA BELONGS TO *ME*! SHE'S *MINE*!

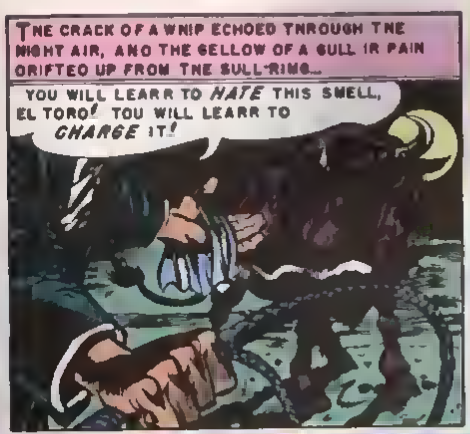
AND THEN MANUEL RODERO THOUGHT OF A WAY. A SURE WAY... TO OBLITERATE THE YOUNG MATADOR, ARTURO ELZAR. AND WIN BACK MARIA CARLO! THE NEXT DAY... FAR FROM MADRID...

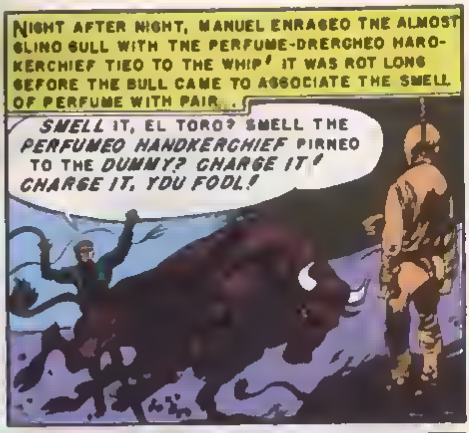
OH NO, SEÑOR! YOU DO NOT WANT TO BUY *THAT* BULL! IT IS VERY *FEROCIOUS*... BUT WHAT IS WORSE—IT IS ALMOST *BLIND*!

I *THOUGHT* SO! YES, SEÑOR! I *DO* WANT THAT BULL! HOW MUCH?

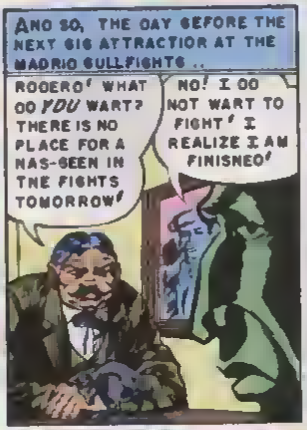
THAT NIGHT, IN THE BULL-RING BEHIND RODERO'S LUXURIOUS COUNTRY HOME, AN ALMOST BLIND BULL FACED A DOWNFALLEN MATADOR... HIMSELF BLINDED WITH JEALOUSY AND HATE...

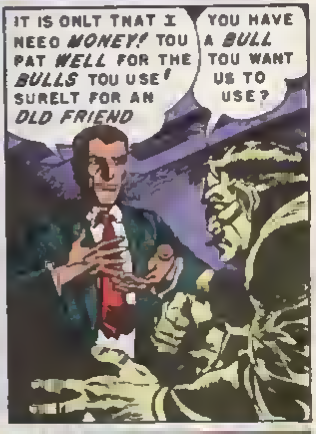
YES, EL TORO! YOU ARE *BLIND*! BUT YOUR SENSE OF *SMELL IS KEEN*! CAN YOU DETECT THE *PERFUME* SATURATED IN THE *HANDKERCHIEF* TIED ON THE END OF THIS *WHIP*?


THE CRACK OF A WHIP ECHOED THROUGH THE NIGHT AIR, AND THE BELLOW OF A BULL IN PAIN DRIFTED UP FROM THE BULL-RING...
YOU WILL LEARN TO HATE THIS SMELL, EL TORO! YOU WILL LEARN TO CHARGE IT!

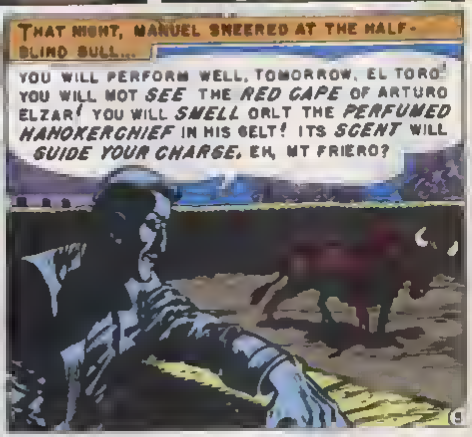

NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, MANUEL ENRAGED THE ALMOST BLIND BULL WITH THE PERFUME-DRENCHED HANDKERCHIEF TIED TO THE WHIP! IT WAS NOT LONG BEFORE THE BULL CAME TO ASSOCIATE THE SMELL OF PERFUME WITH PAIN...
SMELL IT, EL TORO? SMELL THE PERFUMED HANDKERCHIEF PINNED TO THE DUMMY? CHARGE IT! CHARGE IT, YOU FOOL!


FINALLY THE WHIPPED AND TORTURED BULL WAS ABLE MERELY FROM SCENT TO CHARGE THE PERFUMED HANDKERCHIEF ACCURATELY...
GOOD, EL TORO! YOUR AIM IS GOOD!


AND SO, THE DAY BEFORE THE NEXT BIG ATTRACTION AT THE MADRID BULLFIGHTS...
ROGERO! WHAT DO YOU WANT? THERE IS NO PLACE FOR A HAS-BEEN IN THE FIGHTS TOMORROW!
NO! I DO NOT WANT TO FIGHT! I REALIZE I AM FINISHED!


IT IS ONLY THAT I NEED MONEY! YOU PAT WELL FOR THE BULLS YOU USE! SURELY FOR AN OLD FRIEND
YOU HAVE A BULL YOU WANT US TO USE?


SI! IT IS A FEROCIOUS ONE! IT WILL BE A FINE SPECIMEN FOR THE NEW MATADOR, ELZAR! THE CROWD WILL BE PLEASED!
ALL RIGHT! BRING IT TO THE RING TOMORROW! WE WILL USE IT! BUT IT IS ONLY BECAUSE YOU ARE AN OLD FRIEND!


THAT NIGHT, MANUEL SNEERED AT THE HALF-BLIND BULL...
YOU WILL PERFORM WELL, TOMORROW, EL TORO! YOU WILL NOT SEE THE RED CAPE OF ARTURO ELZAR! YOU WILL SMELL ONLY THE PERFUMED HANDKERCHIEF IN HIS BELT! ITS SCENT WILL GUIDE YOUR CHARGE, EH, MY FRIEND?

THE NEXT OAY, MARUEL RODERO'S BULL MAS RELEASED IN THE MADRID SULL-RIRS! THE PICADORES ON THEIR SLIND-FDLOED HDRSES SESAN TO ANSER IT.. STICKIRS THEIR SARRDCHAS INTO ITS SACK..

TRE SULL IS A MAD ORE! IT CHARSES WILDLY!

OF COURSE IT CHARSED WILDLY! IT COULD NOT SEE! SODR IT SRDRTED AND SELLOMED! ROT BREATH FROM ITS DILATED ROSTRILS KICKED UP THE SAHD BELOW ITS LOWERED HEAD! A ROAR MERT UP FRDM THE CROWD! ARTURD ELZAR, TRE MATADDR, ERTERED THE RIRS...

BRAVO! VIVA, ELZAR!

ELZAR CROSSED THE RING ARD SDWED SEFORE MARIA CARLO'S SDX! SHE SMILED WARMLY AT HIM ARD TOSSED HIM HER PERFUMED HANDKERCHIEF...

SEE! *ELZAR* IS HER *BELOVED*, NOW!

ELZAR TUCKED MARIA'S PERFUMED HARKERCHIEF IRTO HIS SELT! THER HE TURRED. FACIRS THE SULL! A HUSR FELL OVER THE CRDWD! THE SULL STOOD PAIR-WRACKED ARD ERRASED PAWIRS THE GRDURD! ELZAR URFURLED HIS REO CAPE! THE SULL DID NOT MDVE! ELZAR SPUN THE CAPE ARTISTICALLY.

THE SULL DOES NOT CHARSE!

IT SEEMS TO SE ISNDRINS THE CAPE!

ELZAR MDVED TDWARD THE SULL, WAVINS RIS SCARLET CAPE! THE SULL STOOD STILL! SUDDENLY, IT LIFTED ITS HEAD! A FAMILIAR SMELL REACHED ITS SRDRTIRS NDSTRILS. THE SMELL OF *PERFUME!* THE MEMDRIES OF PAST TORTURE AND PRESENT PAIR TDSETRER WITR THAT FAMILIAR SCENT ALL KRITTED TDGETHER! THE SULL LOWERED HIS HEAD AND *CHARGED*

ARTURD EXTERDED HIS CAPE, HELD RIS POSITION AND WAITED! IT WDULD SE *EASY!* THE BULL WDULD CHARSE THE CAPE ARD ARTURD MDULD RDT SE SEHIND IT! SUT THE SULL WAS NDT INTERESTED IN THE RED CAPE! THE SULL COULD NOT EVEN SEE IT! THE SULL WAS CHARSIRS THE *SMELL* OF *PERFUME.*

A HORN CAUGHT ARTURO JUST ASDVE THE HARDKERCHIEF ARD THE CRDWD GROANED! THE GORED MATADDR WAS LIFTED HISH AND TDSSED LIKE A LIMP RAD DDLL! BEFORE THE SANDERILLEROS CDULD SET TO HIM..TO DIVERT THE ENRASED BULL.. THE SEAST WAS UPDN HIM ASAIR SLASHIRS WITH ARSRY HDRNS

EEEEEEEEEEE!

HEH, HEH..


THAT NIGHT, MANUEL RODERO SAT IN HIS LUXURIOUS HOME CONTEMPLATING HIS TRIUMPHANT RETURN TO THE BULL-RING! AFTER ARTURO ELZAR'S UNTIMELY DEATH, HE'D RUSHED ON AND DEALT THE BLIND BULL THE DEATH THRUST! THE CROWD HAD GREETED HIM WITH TUMULTUOUS APPLAUSE...
HEH, HEH! ONCE AGAIN I AM THE TOAST OF MADRID! EVEN MARIA WILL BE MINE ONCE MORE!
SUDDENLY MANUEL TURNED! FROM FAR AWAY CAME THE DISTANT PATTER OF HOOVES AND THE SNORTING OF AN ENRAGED BULL! THEY SEEMED TO BE COMING CLOSER...CLOSER! THEY SEEMED TO BE RIGHT OUTSIDE! MANUEL RUSHED TO THE DOOR AND PEERED OUT...
NOTHING! NOTHING OUT THERE! BUT I'M SURE I HEARD HOOF-BEATS! I...I...
IT LUMBERED TOWARD HIM OUT OF THE DARKNESS! IT WAS DRESSED IN THE BLOOD-SOAKED GOLD-EMBROIDERED SATIN COSTUME OF A MATADOR...
ARTURO! NO... NO...
IT GRASPED MANUEL IN ITS STRONG ARMS, AND DRAGGED HIM...SCREAMING ...TO THE BULL-RING BEHIND HIS HOUSE...
LET ME GO! LET ME GO!
AAAAAAAGH!
A HALF-BLIND BULL WAS WAITING! THE THING THAT HELD HIM REACHED DOWN AND LIFTED A PERFUMED HANDKERCHIEF FROM ITS BELT! THE CORPSE OF THE BULL SNORTED... THEN LOWERED ITS HEAD...
OH, GOD! HELP ME! HELP ME!
IN THE MORNING, THEY FOUND MANUEL RODERO IN THE BULL-RING BEHIND HIS HOUSE...
UGH! WHAT A MESS!
LOOK! OR HIS CHEST! IT... IT SEEMS TO BE A HANDKERCHIEF! SMELL IT! IT'S PERFUMED!
HEH, HEH! THAT'S MY STORY, KIDDIES! AND I DON'T WANT TO HEAR ANY CRACKS ABOUT IT BEING THE...OLD BULL! AFTER ALL! ARTURO WAS THERE, TOO! THEY HAD THEIR REVENGE TOGETHER! ANYWAT, IT WAS NOVEL...HAVING THE BULL'S CORPSE ALONG ALSO, EH? WELL, I LIKE A STORY THAT HAS SOME MEAT TO IT! BEFORE I WIND UP THE OLD WITCH'S BOOK, JUST A REMINDER! READ HER COLUMN! IT HAS BACK ISSUE INFO. 'BYE, NOW! SEE YOU NEXT IN TALES FROM THE CRYPT!



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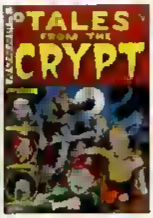
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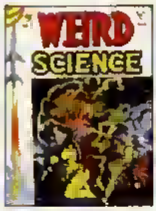
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